

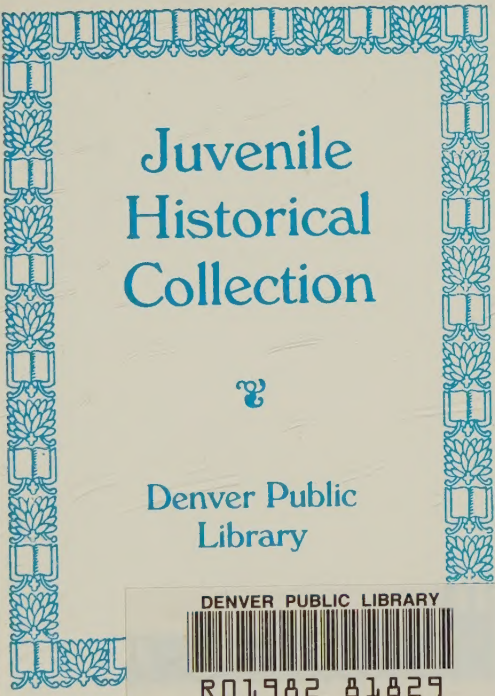


UNDER DEWEY AT MANILA

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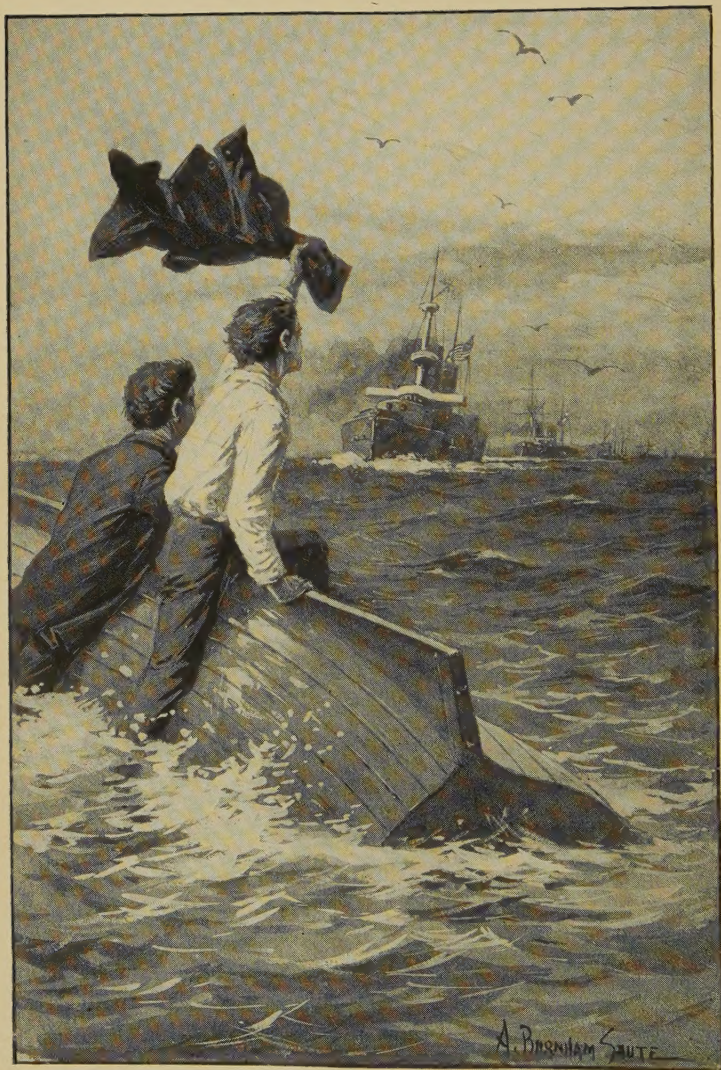
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Old Glory Series

UNDER DEWEY AT MANILA

OR

THE WAR FORTUNES OF A CASTAWAY

BY

EDWARD STRATEMEYER

AUTHOR OF "A YOUNG VOLUNTEER IN CUBA" "FIGHTING IN CUBAN
WATERS" "RICHARD DARE'S VENTURE" "OLIVER BRIGHT'S
SEARCH" "TO ALASKA FOR GOLD" ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY

A. B. SHUTE

BOSTON

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1899



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UNDER DEWEY AT MANILA.

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PREFACE

“UNDER DEWEY AT MANILA,” the first of the “Old Glory Series,” was written with a twofold object. The first was, to present to young readers a simple and straightforward statement concerning the several causes leading up to the war with Spain; to give a brief view of the conditions prevailing in the ill-fated islands of Cuba and the Philippines; and to trace, incident by incident, just as they actually occurred, the progress of that wonderful battle of Manila Bay, which has no parallel in either ancient or modern history, from the fact that complete defeat upon one side was entirely outbalanced by almost total exemption from harm upon the other. In this battle Commodore Dewey, since made Admiral, and his gallant officers and men, fought a fight ever to be remembered with pride by the American people, for it placed the United States Navy in its proper place, among the leading navies of the world.

The other object of the story was to tell, in as interesting a fashion as the writer could command, the haps and mishaps of a sturdy, conscientious American lad, of good moral character and honest Christian aim, who, compelled through the force of circumstances to make his own way in the world, becomes a sailor boy, a castaway, and then a gunner's assistant on the flagship *Olympia*. While it is true that Larry Russell has some hazardous adventures, the author believes that they are no more hazardous than might fall to the lot of another situated as Larry was; and if at times the boy escapes some grave perils, it must be borne in mind that "the Lord helps those who help themselves," and that he had an abiding trust in an all-wise and all-powerful Providence.

The author cannot refrain from saying a word regarding the historical portions of this work. What has been said concerning Cuba and the Philippines are simply matters of fact, known to all students of history. The sketch of Admiral Dewey is drawn from the narratives of several people who knew him well at his home in Montpelier, Vermont, at the Annapolis Naval Academy, and in the Navy itself. The record of the battle of Manila Bay has been

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furnished by over fifty officers and men who took part in the contest and wrote the details, for publication, and in private letters to relatives at home, and this record has been supplemented by Admiral Dewey's own reports to the authorities at Washington.

EDWARD STRATEMEYER.

NEWARK, N.J., August 1, 1898.

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UNDER DEWEY AT MANILA



CHAPTER I

LARRY AND HIS TRIALS

“WELL, my boy, what is it?”

“I stopped in to see if there was any opening, sir, that I might fill. I’m willing to work hard for small wages.”

The man addressed shook his head slowly. “There is no opening. Times are bad, and it is all I can do to keep my regular help employed. Better try your luck down in Honolulu.”

“I’ve been through the city from end to end. It’s the same story everywhere,” answered the youth, soberly. “I thought there might be a chance up here at the Pali; so many carriages coming and going. I’m used to horses, too.”

“Do you belong in Honolulu?”

"Hardly; although I've been there for nearly a month now. I came in on the bark *Rescue*, Captain Morgan, from San Francisco."

"As a passenger?"

"Oh, no; as a foremast hand. Didn't have money to pay my passage."

"Why didn't you stay on the bark?"

"She has been condemned and is laid up for repairs. She'll not be able to go to sea for two or three months."

"And you've got to hustle in the mean time, eh? It's hard luck for a boy of your age, sure enough. Can't you get another berth?"

"I haven't tried yet. Captain Morgan was a very nice man to sail under, and I'll stick to him if I can. Besides, I thought I should like to stay in the Hawaiian Islands for a bit and look around. They tell me there is nothing like looking around."

"That's true; although it's also true that a rover never gets a pocket full of money." The man hesitated and glanced sharply at the boy, who looked hot and tired. "Did you tramp from down in town?"

"Yes, sir."

"It's a good six miles, and all up hill at that.

Come in and have a bit to eat. It won't cost you anything."

The invitation was well meant, but the boy shook his curly head decidedly. "I'm not that kind—thank you just the same. If you've got any work—"

"I'll let you work it out. Come."

The boy and the man had been standing in front of a long, low one-story building, set close to a broad highway, and surrounded by tall palm and other tropical trees. On one side of the structure were accommodations for a dozen or more horses, and on the other a small restaurant where light refreshments of various kinds were to be had.

The spot was an ideal one, near the brow of a lofty precipice standing out twelve hundred feet above sea-level, and overlooking a vast expanse of the mighty Pacific Ocean. Here the island of Oahu, upon which Honolulu, the principal city of the Hawaiian Islands, is situated, seemed to split in two, and the sun, glaring down upon that afternoon, lit up one side and cast the other into the deepest of shades.

"You've been in Honolulu a month, eh?" went on the man, as he motioned the lad to a seat by a side-table, and brought him several dishes which

were already prepared. "Then you've been up here before?"

"No, sir, I haven't been anywhere but to Hilo and to the great volcano. I had a chance to take the trip to Hilo on a lumber boat, and I took it, just to take a run up to Kilauea. My, but that volcano is a grand sight!" and the boy shook his head enthusiastically.

"It's the greatest volcano in the world. Evidently you like to travel around."

"I do."

"You're an American, I take it?"

"Yes, sir, and I guess you are, too."

"Yes, but I'm not from the States. I came from Canada. I've been in the Sandwich Islands eight years now, doing one thing and another. I used to have a restaurant down in Honolulu, but the Chinese cut me out of my trade, and so I thought I'd try my luck up here. But business is awfully dull. Everybody said it would be better after the monarchy was overthrown and we had set up our own republic, but I don't find it so."

"I guess they are going to annex Hawaii to the United States—at least, I heard them talk about it in San Francisco, and down in Honolulu."

"I shouldn't be surprised. I don't care, one way or the other, if only times pick up. I'm alone in the world, but I want to make my living and a little besides, if I can. Last month we had quite a few excursion parties up here,—folks from the Australian steamers and others,—but this month there hasn't been anybody but city folks, and they either don't want anything or else bring it along."

"The Pali ought to be a big attraction, to my notion," answered the boy, as he fell to eating, with more good manners than the average ship hand, as Ralph Harmon noticed. "Captain Morgan was telling me about it—how King Kamehameha the First gathered his fellow-tribesmen around him in the valley and fought the savage hosts of the mighty Oahu and literally drove them over the edge of the precipice. That must have been a battle worth looking at."

"There was nobody here to look at it but those that took part—and it happened a good many years ago. Here, have another cup of coffee; it will do you good." The coffee was served; Ralph Harmon looked out of the doorway, to find the broad highway still deserted, and dropped into a nearby rustic chair. "So you're from San Francisco?" he continued.

"I shipped from San Francisco, but I'm not from there originally. I came from Buffalo, New York."

"You're a good distance from home."

"I haven't any home there, any more." The boy stopped eating and drew a deep breath. "No, I haven't any home anywhere," he added, in a lower tone. "I'm what they call a rolling stone."

"What is your name? Mine is Ralph Harmon, as you probably know by the sign over the door."

"My name is Lawrence Russell — although everyone that knows me calls me Larry. I used to have as nice a home as anybody in Buffalo, but that's some years ago."

"I'll wager you have quite a story to tell — if you've a mind to spin the yarn, as you sailors call it."

"Yes, I have a story; but whether it would interest a stranger or not I don't know, Mr. Harmon. I ran away from home, or rather, from what was supposed to be my home, after my mother died."

"Running away isn't, generally speaking, a good business, Larry."

"I know it, and I wouldn't have gone only I was forced to it. You see, I never knew what it was to have a father. My father died when I was a baby,

and I lived with my mother until I was thirteen years old, when she was killed in a railroad accident, and then I was turned over to my uncle, Job Dowling, my mother's half-brother. He was a very queer man, — the neighbors called him a crank, — and he was so miserly that living with him was entirely out of the question."

"So you cut sticks, to use another of your sailor sayings."

"Yes, I cut sticks, and so did my two brothers, Ben and Walter. None of us could stand his — his infernal meanness — I can't find any other word to describe it. We had money coming to us, but he didn't half clothe us, nor feed us; and whenever the least thing went wrong he had his cane ready, and would strike at one or the other with all his might. Once he hit Ben in the arm and nearly broke it. But I went for him then, and threw him down, and Ben got away. That capped the climax, and he was in for having us all arrested, but before he could do it, Ben and Walter ran away, and I left about three months later."

"And where are your brothers?"

"I don't know exactly, excepting that Ben said he was going to try his luck in New York, and

Walter said he was going to Boston. I wanted to follow Ben to New York, but when I ran away, my uncle came after me, and I hid in a freight car partly filled with boxes of mineral water, and before I knew it I was locked in and rolling westward at the rate of thirty miles an hour. Try my best, I couldn't get out nor make anybody hear me, and I should have starved to death if it hadn't been for the mineral water and a lot of eating that I had along, for I had expected to tramp to New York."

"And when you reached San Francisco, you shipped on the *Rescue*?"

"Not right away. I worked at several odd jobs, hoping to earn enough to pay my way to New York. Then one day I fell in with Captain Morgan, and took the notion to ship to Honolulu and back, and here I am—and likely to stay for a while," concluded Larry.

"How did you like the water?"

"First rate. You see, I was rather used to it—for I was around the lake at home a good deal. But I should like to hear from my brothers."

"Have you tried to reach them by letters?"

"Yes; I wrote to New York and Boston from San Francisco, and also from Honolulu, as soon as I

arrived. Before they left we arranged between us to write. I wish we had all remained together." The youth finished his meal, then arose, and began to gather up the dishes. "I'm much obliged, Mr. Harmon. Now I'll wash the things up, and then you can let me do that work we spoke of."

"There isn't much to do. I was going to split up some of the logs in the back for firewood. You might do a little of that." The proprietor of the wayside resort arose and stretched himself. "To tell the truth, I never supposed it could get so dull. If it keeps so—Hullo, here comes a carriage-load of folks now! By George, look!"

He ran to the doorway and pointed with his finger. Larry Russell followed, and through the dust saw a large carriage containing three men approaching at a breakneck speed. It was moving to one side of the highway, and two of the wheels were constantly bumping over the rocks in a fashion calculated to overturn the vehicle.

"Those horses are running away!" gasped the boy. "See, the reins are dangling on the ground!" And he ran out into the road in front of the building.

"Help! stop the hosses!" sang out a voice full

of terror from the carriage. "Whoa, there, whoa, consarn ye! Whoa!"

"They are making for yonder gully!" burst out the keeper of the resort. "If the carriage goes into that, they'll all be smashed up! The gully is fifty feet deep!"

"I'll stop them if I can!" came from Larry Russell's lips, and with a sudden determination he bounded off in the direction of the runaway team.

CHAPTER II

AN ADVENTURE ON PALI

LARRY RUSSELL was a youth of sixteen, tall, broad-shouldered, and of good weight. His curly hair was of deep brown, as was also the color of his eyes, and his handsome, manly face was thoroughly tanned by constant exposure to the sun.

As the youth had said, he was one of three brothers, of whom Ben was the oldest and Walter next. The boys had never known what it was to have a sister, and now they were entirely alone in the world, saving for the step-uncle Larry had mentioned.

The boys had been brought up in a home which was comfortable if not elegant, and during her life Mrs. Russell had been all that a devoted mother can be, giving the lads a good education and a strict moral and religious training as well. Taking after their father, who had been a great traveller, the boys were inclined to be of a roving nature, but this

spirit had been constantly curbed by the mother, who dreaded to think of having any one of them leave her.

At Mrs. Russell's untimely death, life had changed for her sons as a summer sky changes when a cold and wild thunder storm rushes on. The pleasant home had been broken up by the harsh and dictatorial Job Dowling, a man who thought of nothing but to make money and save it. He took charge of everything, sold off the household treasures at the highest possible prices, placed the cash in the best of the Buffalo banks, and took the boys to live with him in a tumble-down cottage on a side street, presided over by an old Irishwoman, for Dowling was a bachelor.

The first strife had arisen from the selling of some little articles which had belonged to Mrs. Russell's personal effects, and which the boys wished to save as keepsakes. "It's all foolishness, a-keepin' of 'em," Job Dowling had cried. "I won't cater to no such softheartedness. I'll sell the things and put the money in the bank, where it will be a-drawin' interest;" and this he did with the majority of the articles. A few the boys hid, and these were all that were left to them when the final break-up came.

Larry had told but a small portion of the particulars concerning that quarrel—leaving out how Job Dowling had struck him senseless with his cane, and how he had recovered to find himself a prisoner in the garret of the cottage, with his step-uncle gone off to swear out a warrant for his arrest. It had been an easy matter for the lad to escape from the garret by dropping from the window to the roof of the kitchen addition, and with the house-keeper also gone, to the market, the boy had had matters his own way in supplying himself with food. The chase to the freight yard had been a close one, and he had been all but exhausted when the door was shut and locked and the long train rolled on its way.

The train had taken him only as far as Oakland, and there he had remained for several days, with not enough money to take him across the bay to the metropolis of the Golden Gate. Hard times had followed,—for runaways do not always fare so well as boys imagine they do,—and more than once Larry had crept away to some secluded corner, to go to sleep whenever the pangs of hunger would allow. It was hunger as much as anything else which had driven him to accept the offer to ship

with Captain Morgan, and the first square meal he had had for ten days had been eaten in the dingy forecabin of the *Rescue*.

Yet life on shipboard had pleased him greatly, and with the knowledge derived from days spent upon Lake Erie he had soon learned to do his full duty as a foremast hand, and as he was both strong and fearless, the climbing of the shrouds and the taking in of sail in the teeth of a storm had no terrors for him.

The calculation had been that the *Rescue* would not remain at Honolulu more than two weeks, before starting on the return to San Francisco, but a fierce gale had opened some of her seams, and after unloading, an inspection had showed that she must undergo a thorough overhauling before putting to sea again, or else run the risk of sinking in mid ocean. Upon learning this, Captain Morgan had put her into the basin at the ship-yard, and told the crew that they could either wait until repairs were finished or ship elsewhere, just as they chose.

The first few days spent in and around the capital city of the Hawaiian, or Sandwich, Islands had pleased Larry greatly, for there was so much

to see that was new and strange. In San Francisco he had met many Chinese and Japanese, but here in addition were the Kanakas, the natives of the Islands, a race quite distinct in itself, although allied to the Maoris of New Zealand. He had seen them first in the bay, hundreds of them swimming about, — for the native Hawaiian takes to the sea like a fish, — their heads bobbing up and down like so many cocoanuts.

The city itself was also of interest, with its broad, smooth streets, lined with stately palms, and dotted everywhere with broad, low villas and huts, each in a veritable bower of green. Down in the business portion the stores were very much like those in a small American city, excepting that they were kept by all sorts of people, — Kanakas, Americans, Germans, Frenchmen, and numerous Chinese and Japanese. It was not an uncommon thing to hear two men talking, each in a different language, yet each understanding the other. On his first trips around he had visited the Royal Palace, now the abode of royalty no longer, the Government Buildings on Palace Square and King Street, and also the quaint Kawhaiahua church, a structure composed entirely of coral, and erected

by the natives shortly after the missionaries arrived and prevailed upon them to give up idolatry.

Then had come the chance to sail to Hilo, a town situated upon the eastern coast of Hawaii, the largest of the group of islands. Arriving there, he had had time enough to travel on horseback with a small party to the great volcano. It was a two days' journey, and at night the party slept in a native hut, under *kapas*, or bark cloths, and in the morning Larry had his first taste of the great national dish, *poi*, which did not suit him at all, although the natives and some others eat it with great relish.

The journey to the volcano was a hard one, but once arriving at the top, the youth felt himself well repaid for his trouble. He was nearly forty-five hundred feet above sea-level, and before him was stretched the grand crater of Kilauea, nine miles in diameter, with the active portion, called Halemau-mau, or House of Everlasting Fire, occupying one portion of it. Nearly a day was spent here, and Larry went down into the silent depths of the crater, approaching so closely to the terrible fires that his shoes were burnt from the heat of the lava beds upon which he trod.

The youth had sought to obtain work at the Volcano House, a hostelry situated upon the brink of the volcano, but here it was the same tale that was told to him at Pali—the season was dull and no extra help was wanted. So he went back to Hilo, a little place set in a wilderness of tropical growth, and returned to Honolulu on the lumber boat.

The trip to Hilo had brought him in nothing in cash, for he had offered his services in return for the passage, and when he reached Honolulu again he found that all he had left out of his ship's wages was six dollars and a half. "I'll have to economize," he thought, and sought out the cheapest boarding-house he could find. The place was full of sailors, and the next morning he awoke to find that he had been robbed and that his roommate, a burly foreigner, was missing. He had at once reported his loss, but it did no good; and he found himself out in the streets penniless.

Larry might have applied to Captain Morgan for a loan, but such was not his habit, and he set to work manfully to make the best of the situation. For several days he tramped here, there, and everywhere, doing what he could to pick up a living,

until at last he came to the resort kept by Ralph Harmon, as already described. And here we will rejoin him, at the moment he resolved to stop the runaway horses, did it lie in his power.

"Look out for yourself," cried Ralph Harmon, as he came after Larry. "If you don't, those beasts will trample you under foot."

"Whoa! whoa!" went on the excited man on the front seat of the carriage. "Consarn ye, whoa!"

He was evidently a nautical fellow, for he was dressed like a son of the sea. He was standing up, waving his hands frantically. On the rear seat of the carriage crouched his two companions, evidently too scared to speak or move.

To Ralph Harmon's words, and to the yells from the turnout, Larry answered not a word, knowing that it would be a sheer waste of breath. But he continued to cover the ground at a lively gait, and as he ran he pulled off his coat.

"You'll be killed!" screamed Harmon, as the boy stepped almost directly in front of the team. Then the man saw the coat sail up in the air and land over the head of the nearest horse. As the animal paused at having the light so suddenly shut from his view, Larry leaped upon his back.

“Good for you, boy! Now stop ’em!” shouted the nautical fellow on the front seat. “Stop ’em, and I’ll give you a five-dollar gold piece, as sure as my name is Captain Nat Ponsberry!”

“I’ll stop them if there is any stop to them!” panted Larry, for the run and the leap had somewhat winded him. “Whoa, now, my beauties, whoa!” he went on, soothingly, at the same time reaching for the reins.

“We’re going into yonder gully!” suddenly shouted one of the men on the back seat. “We must jump, or we will be killed!”

“No, no, don’t jump,” answered his companion, a man dressed in clerical black. “The boy will stop the horses; see, he has the reins already;” and he added a half-audible prayer for their safe deliverance.

It was true that Larry had the lines, but the coat had fallen to the ground, the horses still held their bits between their teeth, and it looked as if they did not intend to give in just then. The brink of the gully swept closer and closer. Now it was a hundred feet away—now but fifty—and now twenty-five. The boy’s face paled, and he gave an extra pull upon the reins of one horse, and

the carriage swerved just a bit to the left, but not enough — and they swept nearer.

“Get over there!” he yelled, and hit the horse on the side of the head with all the force of his naked fist. It was a cruel blow, and it skinned his knuckles, while the animal staggered as though struck with a club. But the blow told, the team turned, — the punished beast dragging his mate, — and the turnout swept past the edge of the gully with less than two feet to spare! A hundred feet further on the runaways came to a standstill, and Larry slid to the ground.

“Young man, you have saved our lives,” cried the nautical fellow, as soon as he could speak, and lumbering out of the carriage he ran up and assisted Larry in holding the team, which were all a-quiver with excitement, and covered with foam.

“I reckon they are about run out, sir,” answered the youth, as coolly as he could. “How did they happen to break away?”

“I guess it was my fault,” answered Captain Nat Ponsberry, somewhat sheepishly. “You see, I ain’t much used to hosses, and the steerin’ of ’em rather bothered me, and I worried ’em until they jest wouldn’t stand it no longer. Parson, I ought to

have let you drive, or Tom Grandon," he continued to the others, who had also alighted.

"I don't know any more about horses than you do, Nat," said the man addressed as Grandon, also a sailor, by his general appearance. "Don't catch me riding out behind such a mettlesome team again! What do you think, Mr. Wells?"

"I think the boy has done us all a great service," answered the Rev. Martin Wells, soberly. "Were it not for his bravery, and the kindness of an all-wise Providence, we should at this moment be lying at the bottom of yonder gully suffering severe injuries, if not lifeless. I for one thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you have done," he added, taking Larry's hand warmly. "I shall remember you as long as I live."

He was so earnest that Larry blushed, although he knew not exactly why. The others also took him by the hand, while Ralph Harmon came forward, and, directed by Captain Ponsberry, turned the team and carriage into his stables.

A few minutes later found the party inside the little wayside resort, where for some time they discussed the adventure and the part each one had played in it. They had come up to look over the

precipice, but a good deal of their interest in sight-seeing was now gone.

"I don't know as I care to drive those horses back to Honolulu," remarked Captain Ponsberry, after he had insisted upon rewarding Larry by literally jamming a five-dollar gold piece down in his trousers pocket. "Have you got a man around here as can do it for us?" he asked of Ralph Harmon.

"I will drive them down, if you'll allow me," put in Larry. "I am going down, and I'll be glad of the ride. I'll give you my word they won't get away from me," he added confidently.

"There is no one around here now," answered Harmon. "I have a native driver somewhere, but I am sorry to say he drinks and is not reliable."

"I shall feel safe with the boy," put in the Rev. Martin Wells. "Don't you say the same, Grandon?"

"Why not, seeing how well he handled them before? Give the lad the job, Nat, and let us have the best to eat that the house affords;" the last words to the keeper of the resort, who at once bustled off to stir up his fire and his sleepy native cook at the same time.

CHAPTER III

A FRUITLESS CHASE

WHILE the party of three ate the meal prepared for them, Larry worked at the rear of the wayside resort, chopping the wood Harmon had pointed out.

With five dollars in his pocket the youth felt easy again. In Honolulu, where accommodations were cheap, five dollars would last a long while, and he felt that his luck was bound to change before the money was entirely gone.

Close to where he worked was an open window, and from the conversation of the three he learned that Captain Nat Ponsberry was the commander and part owner of the *Columbia*, a three-masted schooner, which had just come into Honolulu from Panama, and was to leave the following week for Hong Kong, China. Tom Grandon was first mate of the schooner, and evidently he and the captain were old friends, both hailing from Gloucester, the

original home of the schooner build of sea-going vessels. The Rev. Martin Wells was to be a passenger, bound also for Hong Kong. He had been picked up in Honolulu, where he had been attached to the English missions. He was in no hurry to get to Hong Kong and had chosen the sailing-vessel because it was cheaper than the regular steamer, although, of course, not nearly so fast.

The three made a pleasant party, both the captain and Tom Grandon being full of fun, and the clergyman not being above a joke himself, although never forgetting his cloth. More than once Larry found himself laughing at what was said, as each quizzed the others about being scared to death.

"I'll wager life on the *Columbia* isn't as dull as it is on some vessels," thought Larry, as he finished cutting the wood and hung up the axe. "I wish she was bound for San Francisco—I'd give the *Rescue* the go-by and strike Captain Ponsberry for a position. Even as it is I may strike him, if nothing better turns up, although I've no great hankering to visit the land of the heathen Chinese."

"Well, Larry Russell, if that's your name, I reckon as how it's about time we boarded ship and

sailed for Honolulu!" cried Captain Ponsberry, after he and his companions had made a brief tour of the Pali. "I promised to be back to the *Columbia* by seven o'clock, and I'm a man as never breaks my word."

"I'll have the team out in a jiffy," answered the youth, and rushed around to the stable. The horses had been left in harness, and it was an easy task to hook them up. He drove around to the front of the resort, the three clambered in, and with a farewell to Ralph Harmon, and a rather unnecessary crack of the whip upon Larry's part, they bowled off down the sweep of the road across which the stately palms were now casting long, wavering shadows.

It was a beautiful drive, that down the Nuuanu Valley and into Nuuanu avenue, past lovely homes that have a perpetual summer, homes hedged in by palms and cacti, and here and there a field of bamboo, with vines clustering everywhere. In two places they passed large cemeteries, surrounded by tall, gray walls, overgrown with moss and guarded by long rows of solemn-looking cypresses; and then they came whirling down into the town proper, now silent and almost deserted, for the time for business

was over, and the workers had hied themselves to their homes, to the bathing-beach at Waikiki, or to some other place of amusement.

“Oh, had we some bright little isle of our own,
In the blue summer ocean, far off and alone,”

quoted the Rev. Martin Wells, and then, as if fearing he was getting too sentimental, he quickly changed the subject. “Larry, you drive like a veteran. Do you own a horse?”

“A horse? I? Hardly. Why, I’m — I’m — that is, I don’t own much of anything in this world — just now,” stammered the youth. “Steady, boys, steady; you’ve behaved well so far; don’t spoil your record,” he went on, to the team.

“Do your family live here?” went on the inquisitive man in black.

“No, sir, I have no family, only two brothers, who are miles and miles away from here. I am a sailor boy, but my boat is laid up for repairs, and so I’m knocking about earning a living as best I can.”

“A sailor boy, eh?” put in Captain Ponsberry. “Why didn’t you say so afore, youngster? A sailor boy, and stopped those hosses that way! Well, I never! Reckon you’re a putty good hand afore the mast. What ship did you sail in?”

“The *Rescue* — Captain Morgan.”

“Oh, yes, I heard tell she was laid up here — got knocked out in a southeaster — they’re putty bad around these parts, though they be wuss off the coast of Chili. So you’re one of his boys? Well, if you ain’t got much to do, come down and see me. We’re loading and unloading, you know.”

“If you can give me work at that, I’ll jump at the job,” answered Larry, quickly. “I’d like to work out that five dollars, if nothing else.”

“Now jess you stow it about the gold, lad; ye earned that fair and square, an’ more, too—eh, Parson? eh, Tom? Don’t you think our lives was worth — let me see — less’n two dollars each?”

This was said so drolly Larry was compelled to laugh. “I wasn’t looking at it that way — it was a big price for stopping a team — I’d like to stop ’em every day in the week at that figure.”

“God forbid!” murmured Mr. Wells. “You might slip down, and then —” he shook his head seriously. “Yes, yes, Captain Ponsberry, give him work by all means, if he wants it, and you have room for an extra hand.”

“We’ll make room,” put in the mate of the *Columbia*. “There is one Kanaka in the gang isn’t

worth his salt. I'll discharge him and Larry can come on first thing in the morning."

So it was arranged ; and at the livery stable where the turnout had been hired the boy left the three men, feeling lighter in heart than he had for a long while. A week's work would mean at least six to nine dollars in addition to the five given him, and who knew but that his newly made friends would put in a good word for him elsewhere, or Captain Ponsberry might even ask him to go on the Hong Kong trip. The more he thought of the trip, the more strongly did it appeal to him.

"I might just as well see all of the world I can while I am at it," he argued mentally. "It won't do me much good to go back to San Francisco right away ; for I can't help Ben or Walter, and none of us can bring Uncle Job to terms until we are of age and can apply for a legal settlement of mother's estate. If I went to Hong Kong with Captain Ponsberry, and he promised to bring me back here or to San Francisco, I know he would do it."

As I have mentioned, the business streets of the thriving seaport city were practically deserted, but up at Emma Square, a few blocks off, the native brass band was giving its weekly evening concert.

Although not a musician himself, Larry loved to hear a band play, and he wandered off in the direction, to join the crowd that stood close to the performers. They were playing a popular air, which had drifted hither from London by way of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, as such airs are bound to do. Larry had heard the same tune in Buffalo, ground out on a mechanical piano, and for a brief instant a spasm of homesickness passed over him.

“Music seems to be the same, no matter where a fellow goes,” he thought. “What a conglomeration of people and what a lot of native children! The Kanakas must love music. Well, it’s nice enough for most — ha!”

Larry broke off short, and pushed his way through the crowd to the other side of the bandstand. He had seen a face that he recognized only too well. It was the face of the foreign sailor who had been his room-mate on the night he had been robbed.

“See here, I want to talk to you,” he said, catching the fellow by the sleeve of his pea-jacket.

The man turned and cast a heavy pair of eyes upon him, eyes which peered from under bushy eye-

brows. He was a Norwegian, Olan Oleson by name, and his reputation well fitted that which Larry had given him.

"What you want?" asked Olan Oleson, grimly, evidently well understanding what was coming.

"I want my money, that's what I want," demanded the youth, firmly.

"Your money? I know notank about your money," and the Norwegian shrugged his huge shoulders and attempted to turn away.

"I say you do know," cried Larry. "You just give it back to me, or I'll have you locked up."

At this Olan Oleson scowled darkly. "You mak one mistak; I no tak your money," he growled. "Let go!"

He jerked himself free, and slipped through the crowd. But Larry was not to be shaken off thus easily, and he quickly followed, to catch the Norwegian again by the jacket just as the crowd was cleared.

"You've got over six dollars belonging to me, and I'm bound to have it, you rascal," he said. "Come, now, no more fooling. I'm not in the humor for it."

"You go way, boy, or maybe you get hurt," re-

turned the Norwegian. "You mak big mistak — I never see you before."

"That isn't true. You slept in the same room with me,—down to the Traveller's Rest,—and you went through my clothes while I was asleep, and then got out. I'm going to have my money, or have the first policeman we meet lock you up."

The last words had scarcely left Larry's lips when Olan Oleson drew back, at the same time putting forth one of his broad feet behind the youth. Then came a sudden and heavy shove, and Larry tripped over backwards, to fall with great force at full length.

As the youth went down, his head struck the ground, and for a few seconds he was stunned and bewildered. Then he leaped up and gazed around him. The Norwegian was running down the highway as rapidly as his heavy weight and natural awkwardness would permit. He was off in the direction of the shipping.

"He's going to get aboard of his boat and hide, if he can," thought Larry, and made after the man.

Several squares were passed, and Larry was slowly gaining in his pursuit, when Olan Oleson

turned and darted into a side street which was but little better than an alleyway. In a few seconds more the boy reached the spot, to find the fellow had disappeared as completely as though the earth had swallowed him up.

The side street was filled with little shops, kept by Chinese and the poorer class of Kanakas. It was a foul-smelling and vile-looking district, and Larry went in but the distance of a block.

"I'll not run any more risks," he reasoned, as he retraced his steps. "Some of those chaps look evil enough to knock a fellow down on the slightest provocation. I might be robbed again, and that wouldn't pay."

Nevertheless, as he walked away, and sought a respectable lodging-house in another part of the city, he determined to keep his eyes open for the Norwegian so long as he should remain in Honolulu. But never once did Larry dream of the important part Olan Oleson was to play in his future life, causing him some amazing adventures, and placing him in a position to take part in one of the greatest naval engagements of modern history.

CHAPTER IV

LARRY RECEIVES TWO INTERESTING LETTERS

“HURRAH! Here’s luck at last! Two letters, and from Ben and Walter, by the handwriting!”

Larry was standing in the handsome structure occupied by the Honolulu post-office department. He had just asked for letters, and the gentlemanly clerk had handed him two, each of goodly thickness, one marked New York and the other Boston. Both had come in on the mail steamer from San Francisco, which had arrived the evening previous.

Hurrying to a secluded corner of the building, he tore open the letter from his oldest brother Ben; for both Larry and Walter had looked up to Ben ever since they could remember. The letter ran as follows:—

“MY DEAR BROTHER LARRY: After what seemed a long wait, I received your letter from San Francisco, telling how you had run away,

and what trials and troubles you were having. I guess we are all having our hands full. I know I am.

“Getting to New York was no picnic. I tramped as far as Middletown, where I found work in an auction store, working four days and earning my fare to the metropolis and a dollar over. When I reached New York I tramped around for three days without so much as a smell of an opening. By that time I was out of money, and I can tell you I was pretty well discouraged, too, when who should I meet on Broadway but Mr. Snodgrass, the man who used to have the hardware store in Buffalo. He asked me what I was doing in New York, and I told him I had come to seek my luck, but didn’t tell him how badly off I was. He told me he was in the wholesale hardware business, on Canal Street, and I could come and see him. I went, and am now working for him for six dollars per week, with some chance of a rise sooner or later. My boarding-house address is at the foot of this letter. The lady is very nice, and she cooks a good deal better than Mrs. Rafferty did.

“I haven’t heard from Uncle Job since I left,

and don't want to at present. But some day I'll go back and tell him what I think of him for treating us like so many dogs.

"I suppose this letter will find you in Honolulu, or some other out-of-the-way place. What possessed you to turn sailor? In a letter I received from Walter he seems to have pretty much the same fever.

"I see by the papers here that Hawaii may be annexed shortly to the United States, so if it is, you'll still be somewhere in the Union, won't you? The papers are also full of our trouble with Spain. Wouldn't it be queer if the two nations should go to war? If they did, I think I'd drop my job and turn soldier.

"I don't know when we three will ever get together again, but I trust it will not be long, and in the mean time I intend to write to you often, and I want you to write also, both to me and to Walter. Write again as soon as you get this.

Your loving brother BEN."

Larry drew a long sigh when he had finished the letter. It was written just as Ben usually talked, and in his mind's eye he could imagine his

elder brother standing before him. So Ben was settled in the great metropolis, with no notion of a change, excepting he might be called upon to turn soldier. Well, there was small fear of there being any war with Spain, or any other country. So thought Larry, and his thoughts were not much different from those of many others until the thunderbolt broke.

The letter from Walter took longer to peruse, for Walter always had so much to say, and wrote such a twisted hand, and Larry was compelled to laugh outright ere he was done. Certainly Walter had had his full share of adventures.

“What in creation made you ship to Honolulu?” he wrote. “Why, it’s almost half around the world, and you’ll make me a beggar with buying such high-priced postage stamps when I’m writing to you. I shouldn’t know where Honolulu was, only we’re all reading so much about the Hawaiian Islands these days. Why didn’t you ship to Alaska, or the North Pole, while you were at it? Better strike Peary for an opening on his next expedition to the land of ice.

“Perhaps I didn’t have it as hard as you, or

Ben? After I left Ben,—I got a ride on the train from Middletown to Albany,—I just struck the worst luck a boy could imagine. My hat was the first thing that went—the wind blew it from the train—and on the outskirts of Albany I encountered a bull-dog that tore my clothing nearly to bits. A tramp saved me from the bull-dog, and I travelled with the tramp two days, when he obligingly walked off with my coat and all my money—forty-seven cents.

“How I got to Boston at last would fill a volume. I have been a farmhand, a glazier (put in two panes of glass for an old lady, who had the glass, but not the skill), a blacksmith (helped at a country smithy two days, when the regular helper came back), a florist (worked three days in a greenhouse, and got no pay, because I knocked a lot of pots down with a step-ladder), and a deck-hand on a river steamboat. Now, at last, I am here in Boston, helping an old sailor, with one leg, that has a large news-stand (the sailor, not the leg). The sailor’s name is Phil Newell, and he was all through the Civil War. You just ought to hear him tell about fighting and narrow escapes from the enemy! He knows all about the war between

Spain and the Cuban insurgents, and he's certain the United States will get mixed up in the row sooner or later. If we do, he says I ought to go as a sailor on a man-o'-war, and I don't know but that I will; for, according to Newell, it's the most glorious life on the face of the earth. Who knows but that I might come out a captain or a commodore, eh?

"I know there is no use in speaking of Uncle Job, for Ben will write about that, and I can't think of the mean old fellow without getting mad clear to my finger-tips. Perhaps that isn't just Christian-like; but really, isn't he the worst that ever was? And to think he was going to have you arrested! He ought to be arrested himself—for breaking up our home, putting all the money in the bank, and making us live as though we were next door to beggars. But never mind; a day of reckoning will come.

"But I must close up now,—the stand, I mean,—and I'll close up the letter, too. Good-by, and take care of yourself, and write often, above all things, for it's mighty lonely being by one's self, isn't it?"

"Dear old Walter, that sounds like him," mur-

mured Larry, as he stuck the epistle back into its envelope. There was something very much like a tear in his brown eyes. "It would be awfully nice if we were together again, and mother was alive!"

Larry had stopped at the post-office as soon as it was open in the morning, just as he had stopped every morning since he had been in Honolulu. Now, putting his letters away, he hurried on, bound for the dock at which the *Columbia* lay.

"Well, I see you're on hand," was Tom Grandon's greeting when he appeared. "You can get right to work, if you will. I've sent that good-for-nothing Kanaka about his business."

"Me take Kuola's place," said a thick voice at Grandon's elbow, and both Larry and the mate of the *Columbia* turned, to find a dusky, fat, and ill-smelling native standing before them.

"What's that, man?"

"You send Kuola away — me take his place."

"I don't want you. I've hired this lad to fill Kuola's place."

"Dat boy?"

"Yes."

"He no strong as Wakari — Wakari werry strong. You try um."

"I told you I didn't want you," answered Tom Grandon, half angrily, for the foul-smelling native had come up closer, and caught him by the shoulder. "You go and look for work elsewhere."

The face of the native fell, and he muttered something under his breath in his own language. He still wanted to argue; but Grandon threw his hand off and turned him around, and then he glided away, noiselessly, like some beast of the forest.

"You'll get into trouble with those boys, Tom," laughed Captain Ponsberry, who stood near. "Con-sarn 'em! Give me a white man for stevedore work, every time. The wust of 'em are wuth three niggers! How are you to-day?" the last to Larry.

"Very well, sir, and ready to pitch in," was the answer. "I should have been here earlier, only I received two letters,—one from each of my brothers,—and I couldn't help stopping to read them."

"Don't blame you for that, for letters are scarce when you get away as far as this. I was looking for letters and papers myself; but Jack Dodger, who went after 'em, ain't back yet."

The captain turned to another part of the dock, and Larry followed Tom Grandon on board of the *Columbia*. Although he had been a sailor but a

short time, the youth knew how to take in many of the good points of a vessel, and his quick eye told him that the *Columbia* was in every respect an A 1 schooner, to use the Lloyds' method of classification, and that all on board was in perfect order and as clean as a boatswain's whistle.

"She's a good one," he observed, as he saw Tom Grandon look at him questioningly.

"None better, lad," responded the mate, "and I expected you to say it. Now come up to the forward hatch. Do you think you could manage yonder block and fall without getting a finger taken off or dropping a valuable case of goods?"

"I think I can. I did just such work on the *Rescue* about a month ago."

"Then pitch in, and if you do a man's work it's a man's wages that will be coming to you when the job's at an end. Come, Hobson, Striker, bend to it now and no fooling, or the *Columbia* will never be unloaded, to say nothing of getting our Hong Kong cargo aboard. Where is Oleson, that new fellow that shipped day before yesterday?"

"He hasn't shown up this morning, sir," answered the man addressed as Hobson, a ruddy faced Englishman. "Was he to work with us?"

"We didn't hire him for it, but still he might take a hand—the sooner we're unloaded and loaded again, the better. There you are, boy, steady now and let her go! Up, up! a leetle more! That will do. It's all right—couldn't have done it better myself. Hobson, this is Larry Russell, the brave lad that stopped the team yesterday. He'll help here as long as there is anything to do," and with a cheerful wave of his hand Tom Grandon moved to another part of the schooner, leaving Larry to continue the task which had been assigned to him.

It is needless to say that the youth went to work with a will, not only because that was his usual way of doing things, but because he wanted to show Captain Ponsberry and the mate that he was capable of taking a man's place, should it come to a question of shipping for the cruise to Hong Kong—something that was more in his mind than ever before, now that he had seen what a good craft the *Columbia* was.

As Larry worked, the eyes of two natives secreted behind a high pile of lumber on the dock beyond were riveted upon him. One of the natives was Kuola, the fellow who had been dis-

charged, the other was Wakari, the foul-smelling chap who had come to take his place. Both were dissolute, only working in order to obtain a little cash with which to buy liquor. They watched Larry for a long time, then both shook their clenched fists at the boy and sneaked off.

CHAPTER V

SOMETHING ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE "MAINE"

ABOUT an hour had been passed by Larry in steady work, when, on looking towards the companionway of the *Columbia*, he saw Captain Ponsberry rush up, newspaper in hand, and so excited that he could scarcely speak.

"Tom Grandon, look here!" he cried. "Consarn the Spaniards, anyhow! Here's news for all to listen to, and news that ought to set the whole United States on fire with indignation. We ought to drown every mother's son of 'em at the bottom of the sea."

"What is it, Nat?" returned Grandon, rushing forward, while Larry and the others paused in their work. "What have the Spaniards been doing to the poor Cubans now?"

"Cubans!" fairly roared the master of the *Columbia*. "It ain't the Cubans I'm talking



about now. It's the teetotal busting up of the battleship *Maine* and the killing of I don't know how many of our gallant jack-tars! See here, the newspaper from San Francisco is full of it, with type six inches long!"

And Captain Ponsberry held up the sheet in question, so that not only Grandon but all the others might see the flaring head-lines.

THE MAINE BLOWN UP!

Total Destruction of Our Battleship in the
Harbor of Havana!

OVER TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY OFFICERS AND SAILORS KILLED!

The Shock Comes at Night, and Without Warning. Captain
Sigsbee Safe, but Several Officers Known to be Lost.

A Partial List of the Saved Ones — How the
News Was Received at Washington.

THOUGHT TO BE THE WORK OF SPANISH AGENTS.

Captain Sigsbee Telegraphs to Withhold Judgment — He Says,
"It is best not to think, it is best to know."

A whole page of reading followed, in smaller type, which Larry could not catch. The youth stared at the head-lines, with mouth agape, and instantly he thought of Ben and Walter, and

what they had said about going to war. If this awful news was true, and the Spaniards were guilty, would war follow?

There was a second of silence, as the sailors read the lines, a silence broken by Tom Grandon. "Tell you what, this is awful, simply awful, Nat! And they say the Spaniards did it? If that's so, there will be war in a jiffy, and don't you forget it—and Cuba will be free."

"Yes, Cuba will be free, and Spain will get knocked into six million pieces," blazed away Captain Ponsberry, who was wont to talk very extravagantly when warmed up. "The cowards! to blow 'em up when they were sleeping."

"Does it say that?" questioned Hobson. "No fair-minded nation would do such a dastardly bit o' work, cap'n."

"I don't say the nation did it,—as a nation,—but their officers did it, and that's the same thing—the sneaks! I see some think it was an explosion from the inside, but I know that couldn't happen in our navy; the rules aboard a warship are too strict."

"That's right," piped up a thin, nasal voice,—that belonged to Luke Striker, a sailor who had been

working beside Larry. "Didn't I put in five years aboard a warship, cruising the Atlantic? There couldn't be no explosion from inside, not with the daily inspections of the magazines, and the wetting of the guncotton, and the keys and electrical connections in the captain's cabin; no, sir. That explosion came from the outside, and — and — but, captain, won't you read the full account?"

"Yes, Nat, read it out; all of the boys will want to hear it, especially those who claim the stars and stripes as their flag," added Tom Grandon.

And so the captain of the *Columbia* read the account which, stripped of its newspaper sensationalism, was as follows; the special report being dated at Havana, Cuba, Feb. 16, 1898.

"At quarter to ten o'clock last evening a terrible explosion occurred on board or under the United States battleship *Maine*, lying in the harbor of Havana. The battleship has been completely destroyed, and over two hundred and fifty sailors and two officers have lost their lives.

"The explosion was so heavy that many of the houses in Havana were shaken, and people ran outside, thinking it was an earthquake shock. It was soon learned that the great battleship had gone

up, and the docks were lined with people, while rescue boats put out from all directions.

“The shock came without an instant’s warning. Captain Sigsbee was seated in his cabin, writing a letter to his wife, while many of the officers and sailors had retired for the night, when there came a deafening report, followed by thick volumes of smoke and a shower of iron piping and splinters, and then the vessel began to sink, her heavy structure and armor plate twisted, bent, and broken like a battered wash-boiler.

“The officers who were below, and who had escaped serious injury, rushed or rather swam on deck, only to find themselves in a mass of wreckage from which it was almost impossible to extricate themselves. The explosion occurred close to the men’s quarters, and but few of the gallant jackies got out alive. One ladder leading from the rear torpedo compartment was literally jammed with men struggling for life.

“Fortunately the *Alfonso XII.* was lying close by, and a powerful searchlight was speedily turned upon the scene. The steamer *City of Washington*, also close at hand, sent out all her boats and brought in a great number of those swimming about,

many of whom were wounded and on the point of drowning.

"So far but few of the dead bodies have been recovered, everybody being on the lookout for the injured. Many have been taken to the hospitals in Havana, while some are lying at death's door on the steamships which were in the vicinity of the explosion.

"A dozen theories have started up as to the cause of the explosion. One is that the guncotton on board went off by spontaneous combustion; another is that the plating between the engine rooms and one of the magazines became too hot and ignited the powder; and still another that the electric lighting system is responsible. The general opinion among those on board, however, is that the *Maine* was blown up from the outside, either by a torpedo or by a sunken mine, most likely the latter.

"There is fearful though suppressed excitement in Havana, and the Americans here look blackly at the Spanish soldiers as they move from place to place. Spanish officers declare the explosion must have come from the interior of the ship, and profess to be deeply concerned over the disaster. Certainly a majority of them are sincere in their

condolence. But in the back quarters of the town the Spanish sympathizers do not hesitate to declare that it serves the Yankees right, that they had no right to send a big warship here at this time, and that they hope every warship that may come from the United States will be served the same way."

"Is that all?" queried the mate of the *Columbia*, as Captain Ponsberry paused in his reading of the newspaper account.

"That's all the news there is of the explosion. I reckon everything was upset, and they couldn't get details," answered the captain.

"The *Maine* must have been a big boat," said Hobson.

"She was a big boat," answered Luke Striker. "I know something about her. She was what they call a battleship of the second class—although I allow as how she was fust class all over. She came out of the Brooklyn Navy Yard and she was over three hundred feet long, nearly sixty feet broad and drew about twenty-seven feet of water. Her hull was of steel, and she was put down as about sixty-seven hundred tons' displacement."

"Who is this Captain Sigsbee?" asked Larry.

"I don't know much about him, exceptin' that he

came from the Naval Academy, and he used to be in charge of the Hydrographic Office, and I've heard he made a big thing of that."

"I see in another part of this paper that there were three hundred and fifty men on the pay-roll," said Captain Ponsberry. "If that's so, then only about a hundred of 'em escaped. It's the wust accident I've heard of since the sinking of that British warship the *Victoria*, which went down by being struck by one of her own fleet while off the coast of Tripoli. She carried about four hundred poor sailors down with her, and Vice-Admiral Tryon in the bargain."

A lively discussion lasting several minutes followed. The news was such that it would furnish talk, especially for sailors, for a long time to come.

But the work aboard the *Columbia* was not to be forgotten, and soon Larry was back at his post, trying to make up for lost time.

CHAPTER VI

A BRUSH WITH TWO KANAKAS

LARRY went back to his work with his head filled with what he had heard. The news was truly terrible. To think of those poor jackies who had been summoned before their Maker without an instant's warning made him shudder, and half unconsciously he breathed a prayer that such a fate might never overtake himself.

"None of the navy for me," remarked Hobson, as he, too, resumed his labor. "I've sailed upon merchantmen going on twenty-six years, and they are good enough for me."

"I can't say as much," put in Luke Striker, who, as Larry soon discovered, was a typical Yankee, hailing from Bangor, Maine. "O' course the rules are strict, and you have to pay strict attention to all commands; but the jackies are a jolly crowd with it all, and then, if war comes, think of all the glory to be won!"

"If a shell or a shot don't finish you," interrupted Hobson. "No," he added, as Striker muttered something about being afraid, "I'm as brave, I think, as most men, but I'm peaceably inclined, and I say, let them as makes the quarrel go and fight it out."

"But the poor lads at the bottom of Havana harbor can't fight any more, matey," said Striker.

"No, they can't, an' more the pity. But then they didn't make the fight at the start. It's those in high authority do that." And Hobson turned to shore with a case of goods he was trucking; and the discussion, for the time being, came to an end.

Although it was still early in the year, it was hot in these latitudes, and when the noonday whistles blew, Larry was glad enough to knock off for his dinner and a rest. He was about to go ashore when Grandon hailed him.

"Have you paid for your dinner in advance?" he asked.

"Why, what do you mean?" returned Larry, somewhat mystified.

"I mean have you a regular boarding-place to go to for dinner? If not, you can have your dinner with the crew, and welcome."

"Thank you; that will just suit me, sir."

"You seem to be a good lad, and I like to see such get along. We had one young fellow on our last trip, but he wasn't worth his salt. Tell Jeff I said you could mess with the rest."

Larry soon learned that Jeff was the ship's cook, — a tall, fat mulatto, much given to singing and dancing whenever the occasion allowed. Jeff smiled broadly when the boy told him what Grandon had said.

"All right, sah, jess git Hobson or one ob de rest to make room fo' yo', an' yo' kin hab' all yo' wants, includin' plum duff an' a slice o' mutton. We is livin' high in dis port."

"Mutton and plum duff will just strike me right," smiled Larry. "When I was on the bark *Rescue*, it was salt horse almost every day."

"Well, I ain't sayin' wot de boys gits on a long trip," answered the cook. "We runs putty close to de wind sometimes."

"Avast there, Jeff!" cried Luke Striker. "Don't give the captain a black eye when he don't deserve it. The eatin' on board of the *Columbia* is all it should be, an' more, without thanking the cook, either. Ain't that so, Hobson?"

"You've spoken the truth, Striker," rejoined the Englishman. "A man as would go thin on such grub has no right to live. If you want to ship, lad, just you strike Captain Nat Ponsberry for a berth, and you'll be safe."

"Do you think he would take me?" questioned Larry, not stopping to think twice.

"Hullo, do you want to go to Hong Kong?" put in Luke Striker. "I thought you said something this forenoon about getting back to the States."

"I do think of going back, but I might take this trip first. I haven't seen much of the vessel, but what I have seen has pleased me, and I took to Captain Ponsberry and Mr. Grandon the very hour I became acquainted with them."

"Which was nateral lad, quite nateral," said Striker. "I did the same—and I've never regretted it. But about taking you—that's another question. Do you know the ropes?"

"I think I do."

"How about doing your duty aloft when there's a storm on and the ship is pitching an' creakin' an' groanin' like she was going to Davy Jones' locker? Would you pull in and clew up for all you was worth then?"

"I'd try to do my duty."

"Douse my toplights if I don't think you would; eh, Hobson?"

"I should hope so. But there's no telling what's in man or boy until he's put to the test. However, if the lad thinks to ship on the *Columbia*, it would do no harm to broach the subject to the captain," concluded the English sailor.

Once having spoken of the matter on his mind, Larry was now quite anxious to speak to the master of the *Columbia* concerning the trip. But during the afternoon neither Captain Ponsberry nor the mate showed themselves, having gone up to the Custom House to see about clearance papers.

"He can use one more hand," said Hobson. "But I heard Grandon speak of a German who wanted to go, a fellow who used to be a sailor but is now working on one of the Oahu sugar plantations. If he's shipped him, I don't see how they will be room for another."

At this Larry's hopes fell somewhat, but they rose again when Luke Striker said he would speak to the captain as soon as he came back. With this he had to be content, and at the end of the day's work he bade the others good-night, picked up his coat, and left the vessel.

His boarding-house was quite a distance from the shipping, and Larry had not covered many squares before he noticed that he was being followed. The persons after him were the two natives who had watched him, and each was armed with a stout club.

"It's queer that they should follow me," thought Larry. "What can they be up to?"

The youth was not kept long in doubt. Having passed from the main street into one of less pretensions, he was on the point of entering the shady grounds surrounding the new boarding-house he had selected, when both natives ran up, each catching him by an arm.

"Want to speak to American boy," said the one named Wakari.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded Larry, at the same time trying in vain to pull himself free.

"American boy take work away from Kuola," answered the second native. "Must pay for doing dat."

"Took work away from you? What do you mean?"

"Kuola work down at dock, on boat *Columbia*.

American boy get captain to send Kuola off, and American boy take Kuola's place."

"I didn't get them to send you off," returned Larry, a light dawning upon him. "He sent you off because you drink." He mentioned the last fact for Kuola's breath smelt strongly of rum, as did also the breath of Wakari.

Both of the natives scowled until their faces assumed a most ferocious appearance.

"American boy pay Kuola for loss of work — must pay," insisted the discharged one.

"What do you want?" asked Larry, not that he intended to pay anything, but in order to gain time to think over what was best to be done. The boarding-house stood fifty feet back among the trees; it was dark at the entrance to the grounds, and the road was practically deserted.

"Pay Kuola and Wakari each two dollars," came the quick reply.

"And will you let me go unharmed if I do that?"

"Yes," and the natives' eyes gleamed, for they felt certain by the worried look upon Larry's face that their demand would be satisfied.

"Let me see what money I have in my pockets,"

went on the youth, and shook Kuola off, at the same time putting one hand down into his trousers pocket.

Satisfied that all was going well for them, Wakari also released his hold. Hardly had he done so than Larry snatched the club from his hand and sprang into the gateway.

"Now clear out, both of you!" he cried sternly. "If you don't, one or the other will get a cracked head. You can't play any such game as this on an American boy!"

The natives were dumfounded at the sudden turn of affairs. Unarmed, Wakari lost no time in retreating, for he had no taste for a blow from the weapon he had carried, while Kuola stood still, not knowing what to do.

"Skip!" went on Larry, advancing upon Kuola. "Help, somebody! Thieves!"

"Be still!" fairly hissed the native, and now his club was raised. He aimed a savage crack at Larry's head, but the boy was alert, and quick at dodging, and the weapon merely struck resoundingly upon the gate-post.

Footsteps were now heard approaching, and once again Larry raised his cry for help, at the same

time making a pass at Kuola, striking him a glancing blow upon the bare shoulder. Then Wakari gave a cry of warning. "Somebody comes; we must run," he said, in his native tongue.

"What is the matter here?" came in a voice which sounded familiar to Larry, and in a second more the Rev. Martin Wells appeared from out of the darkness.

"Help! they want to rob me!" answered the boy. "Oh, Mr. Wells, is that you?"

"Lawrence Russell!" came from the missionary. He turned to the natives. "So you would rob this lad? Are you not ashamed of yourselves? Begone!"

But his words were not heard; for seeing the newcomer was a man, and one carrying a heavy cane, the pair of rascals turned, uttered a few words under their breath, and sped away in the darkness. At first Larry was for following them, but he quickly gave up the thought.

"I'm glad you came," he said, as soon as the excitement was over. "I don't know what would have happened if you hadn't chanced along."

"One good turn deserves another," Lawrence,

quoted Mr. Wells. "You saved me from one peril, and now I've saved you from another, so we are quits—not but that I shall remember your brave deed," he added hastily. "But it is odd they singled you out for an attack."

In a few words the state of the situation was explained, the missionary listening with much interest. "The savage blood is in them," he said, with a grave shake of his head. "There is still much church work to do here. I would remain in this field of labor were it not that I have explicit orders from our home board to go to Hong Kong."

"I understand that you are to be a passenger on the *Columbia*," said Larry, hastily, struck with a sudden idea.

"Yes, my lad, I have picked out that vessel, for it seems to be a good one, and Captain Ponsberry is very much to my liking, too."

"Then perhaps you wouldn't mind putting in a good word for me, sir. I want to ship in her for the Hong Kong trip."

"I'll willingly speak to the captain about it, if you desire it," returned the missionary.

A few words more followed, Larry explaining

the situation, and the Rev. Mr. Wells promising to do all he could towards securing the boy the desired berth; and then the two parted, the best of friends.

CHAPTER VII

GOOD-BY TO HONOLULU

“So you want to ship on board of the *Columbia*, lad? Well, I don’t know. I’ve never had quite such a young hand as you, and the trip to Hong Kong is a long one, and, at this time of the year, it may be mighty rough.”

“I am willing to take what comes,” answered Larry. “I think I am nearly as strong as the average man.”

Larry and Captain Ponsberry were standing near the companionway of the schooner. Luke Striker had just spoken to the captain of Larry’s desire, and Hobson had put in a good word, and the skipper had called the youth from his labors.

“He works as good as any of us, cap’n,” said Striker. “He’s a likely lad, an’—excuse me for a-sayin’ of it—but I don’t think you can do better.”

At this instant the Rev. Martin Wells joined the

group, having come aboard to see that proper care was taken of a box of books he desired shipped.

"Captain Ponsberry, this young man would like to ship with you, and I promised to say a good word in his favor. If you —"

"No use to say more, parson," was the good-natured interruption. "All seem to be in favor of it, and the lad can go if he's set on it. But, Russell, remember what I told you about its being a rough trip, and remember, too, you ship as a regular foremast hand, working as they work and living as they live."

"I understand it all, sir," answered Larry, with a happy smile, which was increased when he beheld a good-natured twinkle in Captain Ponsberry's eye. He knew he was making no mistake, and that the captain would prove as good a man to sail under as there was to be found. "I'll do my level best, and you won't find me skulking when I'm wanted."

"If I do, I'll rope-end you," was the answer, but the threat only made Striker and Hobson laugh. "I never seen the old man with a rope-end yet," whispered the Yankee into Larry's ear.

So it was all settled, and that noon Larry signed articles to sail under Captain Ponsberry in an imme-

diate trip to Hong Kong, China, and back, said round trip to last not longer than seven months, barring accident, the lad to receive twelve dollars per month and found.

“And now I’m booked to visit the heathen Chinees, after all,” murmured the youth, as he turned away to continue his work on the cargo ; but never for an instant did he dream of all that was to happen before his eyes beheld the coast of China.

Larry had told his newly made friends all about Kuola and Wakari, and they, especially Striker and Hobson, had promised to keep a weather eye open for the two rascals. “I’ll pitch into ’em fust sight, douse my toplight if I don’t,” was the manner in which the Yankee expressed himself. “Ain’t nothin’ so healthy fur these furiners as to teach ’em a wholesome lesson.”

But keeping a “weather eye open” was quite useless ; not but that Kuola and Wakari would have been only too glad to visit harm upon Larry’s head. The fact of the matter was, after beating a retreat upon the appearance of the Rev. Martin Wells, the two rascals had sought consolation in drink, with the result that both had swallowed more than was good for them, engaged in a free fight with others in the

resort they visited, and Kuola was now laid up in bed with a broken head, while Wakari was in the local jail, serving out a sentence of sixty days.

Larry was looking out not merely for the natives. He had the Norwegian who had robbed him still in mind, and several idle hours in the evening were spent in trying to hunt this fellow down, but without result. He had told Striker, Hobson, and the others of the affair, and they were justly indignant.

"Such a fellow is no better nor them Kanakas," growled Luke Striker. "It's a pity they couldn't ship in some craft as was bound for Davy Jones' locker. Now the cap'n's took one furiner aboard as I don't like the looks of, but he's signed, an' that's an end on it, I reckon. Hobson, have you heard anything of this Oleson?"

"Tom Grandon said he wasn't coming aboard till the day we sailed," responded the English sailor. "No, I didn't like his looks either. Wish the captain had taken an Englishman or an American instead. I can't bear those Norwegians nor Poles nor Russians."

In another day the cargo was entirely removed, and then the *Columbia* lost no time in taking on her new load for Hong Kong, — a miscellaneous collection

of articles, some of them rather heavy. This work was very laborious, and Larry and the other workers perspired freely under the tropical sun.

"Oh! but it's hot!" he said once, as he stopped to run the perspiration from his forehead with the side of his finger. "We don't catch anything like this in the States, at least not up North."

"This is nothing," answered Hobson. "Wait till we get down just to the north of the Philippine Islands, right in the China Sea; you'll find it hot enough to boil eggs in a dipper on deck, and you won't dare to go barefooted, for fear the hot tar will burn you up."

"I'll agree with Hobson on that," answered Luke Striker. "I once shipped to the Philippines, and we spent four weeks at Aparri, on the northeast coast of Luzon, the main island, and in Manila Bay, on the southwest coast, and, phew! but wasn't it a corker! We were in Manila Bay right in August, and a man didn't hardly dare to walk across the deck at mid-day for fear of getting sunstruck."

"If that's true, then I don't want much of Manila Bay," laughed Larry; and then they resumed their work with all the energy that was left in them, for Captain Ponsberry had promised them a holiday at

his expense if they finished up one day before the time set for sailing.

On a Tuesday night the work came to an end, and hatches were closed with a will. The *Columbia* was to sail at nine o'clock Thursday morning, so the crew would have all day Wednesday to themselves. What to do was solved by Captain Ponsberry, who hired a big stage and took all hands down to the dazzling white beach at Waikiki, but a few miles outside of Honolulu. Here there is the best of surf bathing, just inside of the reefs, with all the proper accommodations, and there is likewise a beautiful park, where the society of the seaport city takes its afternoon drives. Larry enjoyed a dip in the surf very much, having Striker with him, and the bath gave both a tremendous appetite for the seashore dinner, which Captain Ponsberry kind-heartedly provided at the casino nearby.

"Good-by to Honolulu," cried Larry, as the party started on its return. "Take it all in all, it's a pretty place, and one might do much worse than to settle here for the remainder of one's life. It won't be a bad job done if the United States annexes the islands."

"Just what I say," said Tom Grandon, who sat

beside the boy. "Folks talk about the place being half-civilized and all that sort of thing, but they seem to forget that it's more civilized than Texas and New Mexico were when we took hold of them, or Alaska."

That night was the first Larry spent on board of the *Columbia*, for he had removed his chest to the craft before starting on the day's outing. To be sure, the forecastle of the schooner was dark and dingy, as forecastles usually are, but the apartment was clean and in order, and did not smell half so strongly of tar and oakum, tobacco and bilge-water, as other places like it of which he knew. Moreover, his berth was near to the door, so he was likely to get the full benefit of all cool and fresh air which was stirring.

Hobson's berth was next to Larry's, with Luke Striker's just opposite. Then came the berths of Cal Vincent, Maurice Roddmann, and several other sailors, for the *Columbia* carried all the men she required. In the rear was the berth of the Norwegian, who was not to come on board until the last moment, on account of the sickness of one of his former messmates, so he had explained.

Thursday dawned clear and bright, with a stiff

breeze blowing from just the quarter Captain Ponsberry wanted it. The Rev. Martin Wells and two other passengers came aboard directly after breakfast, a score of friends with them to see them off. Larry had already informed Captain Morgan of the change he had made and bidden his former sailing-master good-by, and there was no one else to see.

At nine o'clock sharp the lines were unloosed and Larry flew with the rest to set first one sail and then another. Everything was, of course, strange to the boy, for ships are not built alike, and he paid strict attention to business, feeling that the eyes of Captain Ponsberry and Tom Grandon must be on him. He heard Grandon speak to a newcomer, and knew it must be the belated Norwegian sailor, but did not just then catch sight of the man. If he had, there might have been a row then and there, and Larry's future adventures would have had a vastly different cast.

Only the jib and mainsail were set as the *Columbia* crept down through the coral channel leading from Honolulu harbor to the mighty ocean beyond. The lighthouse was soon passed, and then the schooner pointed almost westward, passing Barber's

Point on her starboard, the last point of land to be sighted for many days to come. Once clear of the reefs, top and foresail went up, along with every other available stitch of canvas, and the *Columbia* bowled along gayly, sending the spray flying in every direction.

Previous to sailing, every rope and every inch of canvas had been thoroughly overhauled, while the *Columbia* had been cleaned as neat as "my lady's parlor," to use Hobson's words, so now there was little to do but to arrange matters in the forecastle, and once the Point had faded away in the blue-gray haze, Larry turned to what was to be his "house" during the voyage.

Yet even here there was very little to occupy his mind. He had arranged his berth the night before. He pulled out his chest, unlocked it, and began to sort over and shake out his clothing, hanging on a nearby hook those for which he might have an early call.

He was thus engaged when a shadow fell beside him, and a bulky form in the doorway shut out much of the light entering the forecastle. He looked up, expecting to see Striker or some one of the other sailors with whom he had become acquainted. But

the newcomer was a stranger, a sour-looking, clean-shaven man of foreign birth.

“Ah !” came in a rough voice, and Larry leaped to his feet. Then, as the newcomer came closer, the boy recognized him, in spite of the fact that he had shaved off his beard. It was Olan Oleson, the man who had robbed him.

CHAPTER VIII

AN UNWELCOME SHIPMATE

“YOU!” gasped Larry. For the moment he could scarcely speak.

For reply Olan Oleson stared at him in what was meant to be total surprise. But the Norwegian had seen and recognized Larry before, and now he was merely acting a part previously determined upon.

“What are you doing here?” continued the youth, slamming the chest shut and shoving it out of sight.

“I am a sailor here,” answered Oleson. “You sailor, too?” The last words with great innocence.

“You’re a sailor here! Do you belong on the *Columbia*? I didn’t see you here before.”

“I just come before we sail. My name Olan Oleson. What your name?”

And the Norwegian held out his brown and dirty hand.

“Why, you — you rascal!” burst from Larry’s lips. “You want me to shake hands? Don’t you

think I know you, even if you have cut off your beard? You're the man who robbed me. You think you got away from me mighty slick, the other night, don't you? Well, I guess we'll settle accounts now."

Olan Oleson drew a deep breath and stared hard at the boy. "What you talk about me robbin' you?" he said. "I know notank about you. You say I rob you, I knock you down!" and he doubled up his big fists.

His attitude was so fierce and menacing that he thought Larry would cower before him. But he was mistaken. The American lad was not thus easily daunted. Instead of taking a step backward, Larry took two forward.

"This buncombe won't work with me," he said as coolly as he could, although he was much excited. "You are the thief, and I intend to expose you and get my money back."

"I no thief—I honest man. You say me a thief, I—I throw you into the sea. Boy, you tak a care, you hear? tak a care!" and Oleson grabbed Larry by the shoulder.

At this juncture Luke Striker entered the fore-castle, to stare in astonishment at the pair, for Ole-

son continued to hold Larry, while the latter sought to push his antagonist away.

"Hullo, what's the row?" queried Striker. "'Pears to me you two are gettin' at it early-like."

"This man is the thief who robbed me at the Travellers' Rest in Honolulu."

"The boy lie — I nefer see him before," came from the Norwegian, and now he hurled Larry from him. "You speak lie of me again, I show you what I do!" and again his clenched fist came up.

"He has shaved off his beard, but he is the man; I can swear to it, Striker. I wish I had seen him before we left Honolulu. I could bring witnesses and have him arrested."

"Wish you *had* seen him in Honolulu, if your story is true," returned the Yankee, who had taken to Larry and felt bound to side with him. "Captain Ponsberry won't want no thief aboard this craft, not by a jugful!"

"We go to de captain," growled Olan Oleson. "The boy mak a mistak. I am honest man — maybe he a thief," and he shook his head to emphasize his words.

By this time Hobson and several others had entered behind Luke Striker, and a hubbub arose, as

one and another began to question first Larry and then the Norwegian. Most of the sailors had heard the tale of the missing money before, and as between Larry's open, honest face and Oleson's sullen, crafty visage, it was plain to see whom they were inclined to believe.

The discussion waxed so warm that Tom Grandon's attention was attracted. He listened to both sides patiently, then brought the matter to a close by demanding that Larry and Oleson follow him to the captain's cabin.

Captain Ponsberry was found in conversation with Rev. Martin Wells and his other passengers. He looked up in surprise at seeing his mate enter with two of the foremast hands.

"This is a serious matter," he said, after Grandon had explained the situation, while the missionary shook his head sorrowfully. "Russell, how do you know this is the man who robbed you?"

"I know him by his voice and by his looks. He has shaved off his beard, but that doesn't count with me."

"You saw him before you retired that night—I mean you talked to him?"

"Yes, sir; for ten or fifteen minutes. He asked

me about the *Rescue* and Captain Morgan, and if I knew where he might get a chance to ship — and he asked me if I had got my pay, too.”

“And he is the man that you met at the band concert in Honolulu?”

“Yes, sir, I am willing to take my affidavit on it.”

“You had a quarrel there?”

“We did. He knocked me down and ran away.”

Olan Oleson had listened patiently. Now he raised both hands in protestation. “The boy tell a lie. I no the man — I an honest man, captain.” He touched his forelock. “If we no be on de ship, I knock him down for what he say. But I good sailor; I know sailor’s place.”

“Yes, I won’t allow any fighting on board ship,” responded Captain Ponsberry, firmly. Then he rubbed his chin in perplexity. “But I hardly know what to say to this. It’s one man’s word against another’s, and there you are. Parson, what do you think in a case like this?”

“Let us pray there is some mistake,” were the missionary’s words, although he, too, was inclined to side with Larry. “You know,” he added to the youth, “there are many cases on record of mistaken identity.”

"How much he say he lose?" questioned Oleson.

"I lost six dollars and a few cents," returned Larry.

The big Norwegian shrugged his shoulders. "I no be thief for seex dollars," he murmured. "If de boy want money so much, he can have out of my wages when trip is done," and he put on a look of disdain.

"I only want my own," cried Larry, the hot blood rushing into his face. "I'd not touch a cent of your dirty cash, you—you—" he broke off as the Rev. Martin Wells caught him gently by the arm. "I don't care—he has no right to talk to me in that fashion," he finished, in a lower tone.

"The only thing to do is to let the matter drop right where it is," said Captain Ponsberry, and spoke so decidedly that all felt he was laying down the law. "I am sorry that you lost your money, Russell, but you can see yourself you have no clear case against Oleson. Now, I won't have any quarrelling on the *Columbia*, mind that, both of you. You can each think as you please, but don't go for to put it into words. And remember, too, I expect each of you to do his full duty—not one to hold back, expecting the other to do

the work. I'm tremendously sorry that there is any ill-feeling on this craft, especially so early in a long voyage, but it can't be helped, and we'll have to make the best of it. Now forward, both of you, and hearken well to what I have told you. Tom, tell the other hands how matters stand, and warn 'em against siding one way or the other in this little unpleasantness."

And so Larry and Oleson were dismissed, while the mate went forward with them to do as the captain had ordered. What Grandon had to say was listened to silently and with great interest, for a sailor thinks theft one of the greatest crimes in the calendar, as it really is.

At first Larry was inclined to rebel at Captain Ponsberry's decision, especially as he had counted upon the captain's friendship. But when he cooled off and reviewed the situation carefully, he saw that the captain had done no more than what could be considered fair under the circumstances. "He is right; in the absence of other evidence, one man's word is as good as another's," thought the boy. "I may as well let the matter drop,—it was only six dollars, after all. But I shall keep my eyes open for Olan Oleson in the future!"

At first the others of the crew heeded Grandon's warning not to take sides in the matter, but this rule was broken that night by Luke Striker as he and Larry were turning in, having been on the same watch together.

"It ain't for me to say much, Larry," said the Yankee sailor. "But I like your way,—took to you when fust I clapped eyes on you,—and I'll back your word up against that furiner every clip. If he tries any underhanded game on you, jest don't hesitate to let Luke Striker know, and we'll send him on the rocks in a jiffy. Now, promise me, will you?"

And Larry promised with all his heart. He felt he had a true friend in the whole-souled Yankee sailor, but how much of a friend time was still to show.

CHAPTER IX

A TALK ABOUT THE TROUBLES IN CUBA

HONG KONG is due west from Honolulu, and the distance, in round figures, is five thousand miles, so it was quite true that Larry had a long voyage before him.

Captain Ponsberry did not calculate to make the entire trip without stopping. In his almost direct course westward were to be found Wake Island and the Farallon de Pajaros, dividing the trip into fairly equal thirds, and it was calculated that the *Columbia* would put into both places for fresh water, and possibly a bit of fresh meat and vegetables, for the kind-hearted captain saw no need of going without these comforts when they might be had with but little trouble.

For over a week the weather proved all that could be desired. It was true that it was hot, but the stiff breeze was comforting, while it made the gallant *Columbia* fully represent her name so far

as build was concerned, for she readily "scooned" over the long swells of the rolling Pacific.

There had been no occasion for Larry and Oleson to speak to one another, and thus far neither had uttered a word. As the days went by, Larry, naturally light-hearted, was inclined to forgive his enemy. But not so the burly Norwegian. Whenever the eyes of the two met, Oleson scowled ominously, and more than once Larry found himself shivering from some nameless dread, he could not tell what.

"I'd give half a month's salary if he wasn't on board," he said to Luke Striker, his one confidant. "If he keeps on looking at me like that, he'll give me the nightmare."

"You look out for yourself whenever you're on night watch with the furiner," answered the Yankee tar. "If you don't watch out—maybe an accident might happen, see?" and he closed one eye suggestively, and then Larry had another shiver.

The looks finally became so threatening that Striker spoke to Oleson about them. "The boy is treating you square enough," he said. "You just leave him alone, and we won't have no trouble."

"I no touch the boy—no spak to him," growled

the Norwegian. "You let me alone, like captain say you should."

There the talk ended, and instead of anything being gained by it, matters were made worse, for Oleson became an enemy of Striker as well as of Larry. He no longer looked at either when their eyes were turned in his direction, yet they felt intuitively that he had them constantly in his mind.

Taken at its best, life on a sailing-vessel on an extended trip is bound to grow more or less monotonous, and were it not for a number of reasons Larry would have found time growing dull on his hands, during the hours when there was absolutely nothing to do, and when he was too wide-awake to think of going to sleep, as many of his messmates did.

But besides Striker, he had made a good friend of the Rev. Martin Wells, and the missionary was not above coming forward to chat with Larry and the others, and in addition to this he loaned the youth several books, which Larry devoured with keen relish, — histories and biographies, books which were rather dry when compared with what the boy had read when at home, but which did him far more good.

As we know, Larry had been very much interested in the blowing up of the *Maine*. Before leaving Honolulu he had heard a later report than the first from the United States, by which it was stated that the Spanish authorities denied any knowledge of the explosion, and that the United States naval authorities were going to take matters in hand immediately by appointing a Board of Inquiry to fix the responsibility.

"This Cuban matter is something of a mystery to me," he said to the missionary one day, after the blowing up of the battleship had been discussed. "What is the real trouble down there; can you tell me?"

"I can tell you something, Lawrence, if not everything," replied Mr. Wells; "but in order to get at a proper understanding of the case I'll have to go pretty well back into history."

"I won't mind that, sir, so long as I've got the time to listen."

The two were seated under the shadow of one of the small boats, and after a second of thought the missionary began:—

"The story of Cuba from the very start has been one of persecution and intense suffering—persecu-

tion so terrible that it can hardly be believed, and suffering in many cases beyond endurance.

“When Columbus discovered the New World, there were but two powers, Spain and Portugal, that disputed for the possession of the new territories, which embraced not only the West Indies, but also a large portion of the southern part of North America, and the northern and eastern portions of South America. The dispute was referred to the Pope, as head of the states, and he granted to Portugal that part of South America which is now Brazil and gave to Spain all the rest.

“Such a vast and valuable possession could not be left alone long, especially as it was known to be inhabited only by savages, and was suspected to be rich in minerals, and before long Spain sent out numerous colonies, commanded by her own noblemen, to conquer the whole of the West Indies, including Hayti, San Domingo, Jamaica, and Porto Rico, as well as Cuba, the largest of all the islands, and the richest.

“When the Spanish colonists arrived they found the islands settled by peaceful Indians and Caribs. Without delay they set about conquering these people, and this done, they made slaves of the Caribs

and also of the Indians, when they could catch them, which was not often, for the Indians would take to the water rather than risk capture. To the Caribs were added slaves from Africa, and all these poor people were treated so shamefully that the Caribs died off like sheep, and even the Africans could not stand it. The one thought of the Spaniards was to make money, and they cared nothing for their slaves' bodies though professing a desire to save their souls."

"It's a wonder they didn't rebel?"

"They did rebel, but they had no arms and were unskilled in warfare, and each time they were put down with greater cruelty. Old writers have left us many accounts of those fearful times, — accounts the reading of which makes one's heart ache."

"But now Spain doesn't own all of the islands, nor any of North America?"

"She owns nothing now but Cuba and Porto Rico, and a few small places of no importance. Her cruelty and rapacity has had its reward. The gold and silver and other riches sent by noblemen from the islands to Spain lured the buccaneers of the world to that locality, and many were the ships which were taken and plundered. Then other nations heard of the wealth which was there, and of

the great cruelty, and took upon themselves the task of setting matters right. The least interference enraged the Spaniards, and numerous fights followed, and in the end, as I have stated, Spain was stripped of nearly everything. And she has lost more than I spoke of before, too, for she once controlled Mexico, Texas, and what is now New Mexico, California, and Nevada."

"But what has brought about this present trouble?"

"I am coming to that. As years went by, the colonists in Cuba and other islands increased, until the home government had a new element to deal with, for slavery was now a thing of the past. These colonists became tired of paying their heavy taxes to the mother country, especially as they derived no benefits, and so other rebellions broke out, until Cuba was in a state of perpetual war. The hand of Spain was an iron one, however, and could not be shaken off. The colonists were allowed nothing, not even to run their own internal affairs, for every office was filled from Spain, and the taxes became heavier and heavier.

"At last, about three years ago, the Cubans, or a large portion of them, resolved to stand it no longer.

They withdrew from Havana and some of the other large cities, and set about establishing a government of their own. They formed an army, the watchword of which was 'Cuba Libre!' meaning Free Cuba, and swore to hold no communication with the Spanish authorities until their freedom was acknowledged."

"Yes, I've heard of that, and how they have been fighting the Spanish soldiery ever since. But still I don't see where *we* come in," said Larry, earnestly.

"Don't be impatient, Lawrence, and you will see. Yes, the Cubans have been fighting for three years with varying success. They were poorly equipped and scarcely organized, and the most they could do was to stick to the forests and mountains, and wage a sort of guerilla warfare against the trained regiments from Spain sent over to annihilate them. As the situation now stands, the Spanish hold all of the large towns and the seacoast, while the insurgents, as they are called, hold the interior and many small villages.

"Of course such a condition of affairs so close to the United States could not help but arouse sympathy for those who had been so illy treated, and

expeditions were sent out secretly to help the rebels ; but this was against international law, and Spain promptly called upon the United States government to put down the practice. Then the insurgents, through their Junta, or representatives in our country, asked for recognition before the world, so that they might be free to use the ports of the United States and do many other things they otherwise could not do, but recognition has not yet been obtained, although it is being considered by Congress.

“ But now comes another view of the present situation, and this is worse than the fighting that is going on. Under the guise of wishing to protect the weak and helpless in the country and in villages, the Spanish authorities in Cuba have been driving all of the women, children, and old men into the big cities and holding them there. The young and middle-aged men, of course, cannot be thus driven, for they are in the ranks of the insurgents. But when the women and children and old men get into the cities there is nothing for them to do, and, as most of them are poor, they are actually compelled to starve, unless some kind-hearted soul will feed them.”

"If that's the case, we ought to help the poor people, war or no war!" cried Larry, heartily.

"That thought is exactly the thought of those who have lately taken hold, to send supplies to Cuba and to aid in every way possible the poor, sick, and dying. Up to date several hundreds of thousands of the poor people have died from exposure and the want of nourishment, and the whole Christian nation is crying out that such inhumanity must cease. But Spain wants no one to interfere, stating that to give succor to the rebels will only prolong the disturbance which she will soon end."

"Never mind; we ought to help, whether Spain likes it or not, that is my idea of it, Mr. Wells."

"The efforts of the Americans in Havana and elsewhere have stirred up much bad blood, and it was to protect those Americans that the *Maine* was sent into Havana harbor. Now that the *Maine* has met with such a sad fate I presume the feeling upon both sides is more bitter than ever. I should not be surprised to hear of a riot in Havana, in which many Americans might be slain."

"But if that court of inquiry finds that the *Maine* was blown up by some Spanish agents, won't that

mean war?" concluded Larry, as a shrill pipe from the boatswain's whistle caused him to arise.

"It will mean another step in the direction of war," was the grave response.

CHAPTER X

ATTACKED IN A STORM

“COME, boys, tumble up lively now, unless you want to spend the next week in sail-sewing!” cried Cal Vincent, the boatswain of the *Columbia*. “There’s a storm a-brewing, and the old man reckons as how it will be best to take in a little sail to onct!”

While listening to the interesting talk of the missionary, Larry had noticed the sky growing darker, and he leaped up with alacrity, for he remembered that it was the neglect to shorten sail in time on board of the *Rescue* which had caused the bark to strain and open some of her seams. Besides, if there was one thing he detested on shipboard, it was to sit down with a heavy sailor’s needle and assist at sail-mending.

“I don’t reckon it’s going to be much, but still one can’t allers tell,” remarked Luke Striker, as he came tumbling out of his berth, where he had been

dozing upon that hot afternoon and dreaming of his far-away down-east home. He had spent many years on the ocean, yet that spot of his boyhood was as dear to him as ever.

Captain Ponsberry himself was on deck, giving orders at the top of his voice, and everybody was scurrying here and there, for orders to shorten sail are always obeyed quicker than any others on ship-board, the reason for which is obvious.

“Lay aloft there now, men, and don’t stop to think about it,” cried the captain. “Come now, Hobson, show your heels up those ratlines, and, Oleson, don’t move as though you had chunks of lead in your boots. See, Russell is ahead of all of you, and he’s but a boy. Now then, all ready?”

“All ready, sir,” came from various quarters.

And then came a rapid succession of orders, each followed by a creaking of halyard blocks, as the topsails came down, followed by the jib and flying-jib. The fore-course, main-course, and mizzen-course were left standing, but the men were kept on deck, to reef or take in entirely, should it become necessary to do so.

Oleson had followed Larry up to the foretop, with an extra sour look upon his swarthy face, for he

did not like the remark the captain had cast at him, nor the compliment paid to the boy. "Get ofer dare!" he growled, pushing up against Larry. "You want all de room to yourself. How I tak in sail if you under my feet?"

"You've got as much room as I have," answered Larry, firmly. "Keep your distance," he added, as Oleson continued to crowd him. "Mind now what I say!"

To this the Norwegian made some uncomplimentary answer, which was, however, swallowed up in the noise of the flapping sail as it came down on the run.

The *Columbia* was rolling and pitching upon the heavy swells under her, and Larry found it no easy task to keep his balance as he helped furl and fasten. It was blowing lively, too, and the wind whistled almost a gale into his ears.

Again Olan Oleson crowded him, until there was but little left to stand upon. The boy shouted another warning, but the Norwegian paid no attention.

Suddenly a fearful dread took possession of the lad. Olan Oleson meant to shove him over into the sea.



DON'T GASPED THE BOY "OH, YOU AFFAIRS" DON'T Page 95

“Keep your distance!” he cried, at the top of his lungs. “Keep your distance. Below there! help!”

“You be still!” growled the Norwegian. “I no hurt you. You go—”

A gust of wind swallowed up the words which followed. Again the *Columbia* went over, caught short in the swell under her. The topmast dipped thirty feet or more to leeward, and Larry made a tight clutch on the cross-tree, only to find himself shoved rudely off.

His right hand held the gasket he had been tying up, and that was all. Over rolled the ship again, and now his body swung clear into the air, supported only by that slender, plaited rope, which was old and not above snapping without warning. Beneath him was the churning sea, above him the slender topmast and the dark and angry sky. He shuddered and was tempted to close his eyes, but could not.

“You let go!” came from Olan Oleson, and he caught hold of the gasket as if to shake Larry from it.

“Don’t!” gasped the boy. “Oh, you villain! don’t!”

He continued to cling fast despite the fact that Olan Oleson's hand was over his own, pressing the knuckles to make the fingers relax and slip. But now the *Columbia* swung over to the other side, and he felt his feet touch the rigging below. The gasket slipped ; but legs and arms were on the alert, and in a second more he found himself safe, on a level with Olan Oleson's feet. Fearing a kick, he lost no time in descending still further, until, finding himself at Luke Striker's side, he deemed himself comparatively safe.

The storm had evidently reached its height, and as the *Columbia* carried her lower sails well, there was nothing for the sailors to do but to stand around and wait until the wind should either increase or decrease. The spray was flying everywhere, and Larry followed Striker into the fore-castle for his oilskin coat.

"'Pears to me I heard somebody cry for help when I was aloft," remarked the Yankee sailor. "Must have been the wind, but it did sound very much like a human voice."

"It was a human voice," answered Larry. "I yelled just as loud as I could."

"And what for? Were you afraid of falling?"

"I was afraid of being pushed off."

"Gee shoo!" Striker stared at the lad a second. "Say, that furiner was up there with ye? Did he try —"

"Yes, he did. If I hadn't clung fast for all I was worth, and dropped to the lower cross-tree when I got the chance, I would at this minute be out on the ocean a mile astern," and Larry shuddered.

"The Norwegian ought to be put into irons! Why don't you go to the old man and report?"

"What good would it do? It would only be another case of my word against Oleson's, for of course the fellow would deny everything."

"Yes, but have you got to stand this a-havin' a chap around as is achin' to do sech a dirty trick as that? I don't think you have, not by a jugful!"

"I certainly wish Oleson hadn't shipped on the *Columbia*. If it wasn't for him, this trip would just suit me, for every one of the others is a good mess-mate," responded Larry.

He had procured his oilskin and was putting it on, when there was a heavy tramping near the doorway, and Olan Oleson came in. He was about to withdraw upon seeing the boy and his companion,

but with a quick leap, Luke Striker caught him by the arm and pulled him inside.

“You good-fer-nuthin’ rascal!” he cried, catching the Norwegian by the collar and running him up against a back berth. “What right have you to attack this boy up in the top, eh? You jess let that lad alone or I’ll—I’ll wipe up the deck with ye, by the jumpin’ Christopher I will!”

And he shook the burly sailor until the man’s teeth fairly rattled. Striker was not as tall as Oleson by several inches, and his weight was considerably less, but his muscles were tough and his bravery unequalled, and there was nothing he would not tackle when aroused. In vain the Norwegian struggled; that grip could not be broken.

“You let go me!” spluttered the swarthy fellow. “You let go! I no mak quarrel with you. Let go, or I tell captain.”

“Tell the captain, and that’s all the good it will do you. He won’t allow sech a rascal as you aboard one minit longer nor he can help, and I know it. Tell him, and take that! and that! and that!”

Each “that” was followed by a bump of Oleson’s head upon the edge of the berth, blows hard enough

to crack an ordinary man's skull. After the last bump Striker threw the man to one side, motioned to Larry, and both walked outside.

"Maybe that will teach him a lesson," muttered the Yankee sailor. "Hang those furiners, anyhow!"

"You have made an enemy of him for life, Luke," returned the boy. "Hereafter he'll try to do as bad by you as he has tried to do by me."

"Let him; we'll both be on our guard. But don't you go aloft with him again."

"I won't."

"And on second thought I don't know but what it will be jest as well not to speak to Captain Ponsberry about it. Let Oleson see that we can take care of ourselves, and he'll have more respect for us."

They were now called upon to shorten sail still more, and consequently the conversation had to come to an end. While taking in the fore-course and the mizzen-course Oleson came out to assist, but did not look at either of them.

Although it blew strongly all night, the storm was but an ordinary one, and by sunrise the next day the wind had fallen sufficiently to allow the

Columbia to proceed upon her way again under full sail. Olan Oleson kept his distance, nor did he even look at Larry or Striker. "He's learned his lesson," said the Yankee tar, but how grievously he was mistaken the chapters which follow will show.

They were now reaching the vicinity of Wake Island, and a constant lookout was kept, that they might not pass the spot, which is low-lying, rather barren, and of small territory. Larry was up in the cross-trees one afternoon, when he saw the island far to the north of the *Columbia*.

"Land O!" he sang out, and the cry soon rang through the ship, speedily bringing the captain, Mr. Wells, and everybody else on deck.

"Where away?"

"On our starboard quarter, captain. I can just see a bit of rocks and trees."

A marine glass was brought into use, and after a brief survey Captain Ponsberry decided that it was Wake Island. The course of the *Columbia* was immediately changed, and an hour later they were moving slowly into a small but safe harbor, surrounded by coral reefs upon which the sea pounded incessantly.

Larry had expected Wake Island to be a spot where a fine run ashore might be indulged in, and was somewhat surprised and disappointed to find the place so barren. However, there was a good spring close at hand, and as they wanted fresh water more than anything else there was little over which to grumble. A whole day was spent in filling the *Columbia's* water-casks, and then off they sailed again, bound as before, due west.

CHAPTER XI

A RACE AND AN INTERRUPTION

THE days and the weeks passed, and the gallant *Columbia* kept steadily upon her course. They had now passed longitude 150° east of Greenwich, and were but a short distance north of the Ladrões, while the *Farallon de Pajaros*, Captain Ponsberry calculated, would be sighted within the next forty-eight hours, providing the wind did not fall.

The *Columbia*, up to this time, had been making a quick passage, but now, with the going down of that heavy and hot sun, the wind died out utterly, and on the following day the sails flapped idly against the masts, and everything came to a standstill.

"We are in for a calm now," remarked Striker. "I knowed we was bound to come next to it sooner or later."

"Never mind," replied Larry, ever ready to look upon the cheerful side. "When it does blow, it will come so much the stronger."

"Yes, and then we'll run the risk of having a mast taken out," grumbled Hobson, who could endure almost anything but standing still. "Give me a good steady breeze every trip."

The men hung around here and there, or lay in the coolest spots they could find, dozing or sleeping. The only sound that broke the stillness was the voice of Jeff, as he prepared meals and sang his plantation melodies. He had one song in particular, relating the mishaps of "My Gal Susannah!" which he seemed to be never weary of repeating. The darky was the only one satisfied to let the calm take care of itself.

Olan Oleson had kept his distance, and it really began to look as though the lesson Striker had given the fellow had done some good. But the burly Norwegian had not forgotten, for such was not his nature. Secretly he was plotting to strike both Larry and his Yankee friend a most dastardly blow.

Striker sat in front of the forecastle, his legs under him, in the fashion of a tailor. He had a score of bits of wood about him, and was engaged in whittling out the model of a boat with his jack-knife. Not far away rested Larry, a big book on

his lap, which the boy was reading with great eagerness. The book was entitled "Naval Heroes of History," and contained accounts of the stirring battles fought by Nelson, Perry, Jones, and other celebrities. The Rev. Martin Wells had loaned him the volume, and he was reading aloud to Striker.

"My, but I wish I had been there!" he cried, as he finished the account of the famous fight between the *Serapis* and the *Bonhomme Richard*. "How proud Paul Jones must have felt at that victory. And at such close quarters!"

"We'll have no such fighting any more," answered Luke Striker. "The old wooden vessels are gone, and with ships built of steel, and armed with guns that can hit the enemy six or seven miles off, it's not likely there will be any hand-to-hand, rough and tumble work. It's reduced to a science, as the parson would call it."

"Nelson's victory at Trafalgar was the greatest victory known to naval history," put in Hobson, who had come up in time to hear the talk. "No, I don't say it because I'm an Englishman, but because it's a fact. He had a splendid fleet of ships, it is true, but he had the combined fleets of France and

Spain against him, and the way he went at them and smashed them up from the very start of the fight is something for every sailor to remember as long as the world goes round. The only bad thing about it was that he was shot down in the very thick of it and killed."

"Yes, this book tells about that, and how England has honored Nelson, too," said Larry. "And such a man deserves to be honored."

"There ain't no telling how our modern battle-ships are going to pull through in a fight," said Striker. "Although England and America and France and Germany and Spain and some of the other countries have 'em, they ain't been put into active use. I've been told the Chinese and Japanese used some of 'em during their late war, but them heathens don't count — not alongside o' Anglo-Saxon blood; eh, Hobson?"

"I grant you that, every time, Striker, — Anglo-Saxon blood every trip, — against the world," cried the Englishman, heartily. "Now you take it among ourselves," he went on, after a pause. "The Americans and English and Germans, and even the French, can get along together; but put a Spaniard or a Portuguese or an Italian, or one of that

kind of fellows aboard and there's trouble right away — I've seen it a hundred times."

"You might add the Norwegians to the off crowd," put in Larry, glancing to where Olan Oleson sat sullenly chewing his quid of plug-cut.

Hobson laughed and tossed his head. "I would willingly if they were all like yonder chap. But they are not — I've known Norwegians as fair and square as any of us."

"We'll let him alone, so long as he lets us alone," rejoined Striker. "What's up, Cal?" he added, as the boatswain approached.

"The captain says as how if any of you want to take a swim now is your chance," said the boatswain of the *Columbia*. "We'll put the jollyboat out and lower the sails, and them as wants to can stay out till sundown."

"Hurrah!" cried Larry, closing his book and springing up. "A swim will just suit me. Come on, Striker, and let's get at the sails at once."

The majority of the crew were willing to do anything to break the monotony, and soon the sails were furled and the yawl swung over and allowed to drift astern, with a couple of pairs of oars placed athwart the seats, in case it should prove necessary

to row out to anybody seized with a cramp. There were a number of old bathing-suits aboard, and soon Larry had donned one of these.

“Here goes !” he cried, rushing to the rail. For a moment he stood erect, his hands over his head. Then with a graceful curve he went down, cutting the water like a knife, and disappearing with hardly a splash beneath the bluish-green surface. A few seconds later Luke Striker followed, and then came half a dozen others in a bunch, shrieking, laughing and sporting like so many overgrown boys ; for when your true sailor is out for a lark, he never thinks of his age, no matter how old he may be.

The water was warm and refreshing, and never had Larry enjoyed a swim more. He dived half a dozen times, from the yawl, and then challenged Striker to a race around the *Columbia*, which lay nearly stationary in the swells of the ocean.

“All right, I’ll beat ye out of your butes !” cried the Yankee, and splash ! splash ! both left the yawl at the same instant, and the race began. Captain Ponsberry, standing at the stern, saw what was going on and shouted in approval.

“Go on, both of ye !” he cried. “A prize to the fellow as wins ! Striker, the boy will beat ye unless

you use your long arms better than that. Now then, both do your level best, and remember to swim clear o' the bow!"

"It's Striker's race," cried the boatswain, who was also in the water. "It stands to reason the man will win."

"I'll wager you a plug of tobacco the boy comes out ahead," answered Hobson. "See what a splendid stroke he's making — I never saw a better, even on the Thames!"

"Let us follow!" cried another, and this all did, but keeping at a safe distance, so as not to interfere with the racers. Mr. Wells had come upon deck and was as much interested as anybody. He shouted loudly to Larry, and the boy heard him, looked up a brief instant, and smiled.

For the first quarter of the distance Larry took the lead and kept it. His stroke was not so long as that of Striker, but it was quicker, and he was, moreover, using his feet to the best possible advantage. But now, as the pair neared the bow of the *Columbia*, the Yankee sailor began to pull up.

"I'm a-comin', lad!" he puffed. "It's a pity I've got to beat ye, but it can't be helped — I can't afford to lose my reputation as a swimmer among the boys."

"I'm not beaten yet, and I don't mean to be," laughed Larry, "and I'm not going to lose my wind talking," he added, and became silent.

On and on they went, each riding lightly over swell after swell, until the bow was gained. Heeding the captain's warning, Larry gave it a berth of several feet, and Striker did the same. But the man was now close at hand, and a few additional strokes put him several feet in advance.

"Striker's ahead!"

"Go it, Larry; don't let him beat you!"

"The best man wins, and it's a new pair of pants he gets as a reward!" cried Captain Ponsberry, and held up the garment mentioned—a pair picked up on the ship many months before with no owner coming forward to claim them. "I think they'll most fit ye, Larry, so put in your best licks for 'em!"

"Stretch 'em out to fit me, cap'n!" cried Striker, "for they'll be mine when this race is over; stretch 'em out!" And a laugh went up at the Yankee's words.

The lank sailor was now two yards ahead, and the yawl was less than thirty yards off. In vain Larry tried to increase his stroke, the distance between him and his opponent remained the same.

“Go it, Larry, go!” cried Hobson. “Give me your foot, and I’ll give you a shove!”

“Hi! hi! no foul play back there!” roared Striker. “This race is to be won on its merits. Now, then, for the wind up!” and he renewed his efforts.

But he was almost winded, for the race had been a stiff one from the start, and he was not used to exerting himself in the water. On the other hand, Larry was still fresh, and had taken part in several swimming matches before. The boy renewed his efforts to overtake his opponent, and now, as the yawl drew closer, he slowly but surely crept up.

“See, see! Russell is gaining!” cried Tom Grandon, from the taffrail.

“He’ll win out, after all!” echoed the Rev. Martin Wells, who was quite excited. The race made him think of his college days, ten years gone by.

On and on the pair in the water continued to go, until the yawl, rising and falling with the swell, was less than fifteen feet away. Striker was still a yard ahead and pushing forward like a blown porpoise. Larry continued to diminish the distance between them.

“Hurry up, Larry, and you’ll make it yet!” cried Grandon.

And Larry did hurry, putting forth every ounce of muscle that remained. His head was now up to Striker's knees, and now he made a last desperate plunge and drew up alongside of the Yankee. A yell arose on every side.

"They are even!"

"Go it, both of you!"

And go it they did; but Striker was doing his best, and Larry also, and neither could increase his speed. Up they shot to the yawl, and two hands went up to the gunwale simultaneously.

"It's a tie!"

"Both have won!"

"That's the best race I've seen in a good —"

Bang! crash! the words of the last speaker were drowned in a noise as unexpected as it was dismaying. The yawl was seen to rise in the air, which was instantly filled with flying splinters, and Larry and Striker disappeared like a flash from view.

CHAPTER XII

THE CAPTURE OF A SAWFISH

“A SAWFISH, sure as you’re born!”

It was Tom Grandon who uttered the cry, and as the words left his lips, he pointed excitedly to the rear of the yawl, through which was thrust a dark, bony substance very much resembling the blade of a double whip-saw. Back of the yawl a big fish was floundering,—the sawfish itself,—churning the water into a white foam.

“Russell! Striker! where are they?” shouted Captain Ponsberry, and then turning, he darted towards his cabin, to bring up a harpoon hanging upon the hooks below.

“A sawfish! A shark!” yelled those who had been following the racers; and at once there was a wild scramble to gain the side of the *Columbia*. Ropes were thrown over by Tom Grandon and several others, and the men lost no time in clambering up to the deck. Then came a rush to the taffrail.

All this while the sawfish was doing its best to extricate its saw from the wreck of the boat. This was not easy, and the splinters continued to fly in all directions, while the flying spray reached even to those who watched the struggle. The fish was at least eight feet long, while the saw was a yard more, and it looked as if the yawl would be pounded and cut into bits before the conflict came to an end.

"Where in the world are Larry and Striker?" cried Hobson. "They can't be tangled up under that fish, can they?"

"God forbid!" murmured the Rev. Martin Wells. "Yet I see nothing of them," he added sorrowfully.

Captain Ponsberry now reappeared, harpoon in hand. In years gone by the captain had been a whaler, and the harpoon was one with which he had struck many a monster of the deep. A light line was attached to it, which he rapidly uncoiled.

"Now, then, make room, and I'll give the rascal a taste of this!" cried the master of the *Columbia*; and standing on the taffrail, he took careful aim and let drive. There was a short whiz; the harpoon was seen to pierce the sawfish's side, and in-

stantly the struggles grew more violent, while the sea was dyed a deep crimson.

"Good! he's struck!" cried several of the crew. "Shall we haul him in, captain?"

"No; hold the line, that's enough — he's not dead yet, and we don't want him to smash anything more," was the answer. "Ah, he's free of the yawl now! There he goes! Hold hard, all of you, or he'll pull you overboard!"

The men held "hard" as ordered, and the sawfish left the stern of the *Columbia* only to dart forward towards the bow. Then it went back and forth, hitting the line with its saw, but failing to break it. But the movements grew weaker and weaker, and at last ceased utterly, and then the great fish turned over on its back, and the fight was over.

"He's dead," muttered Tom Grandon. "But where are Russell and Striker?"

"Perhaps the sawfish struck 'em and killed 'em," suggested the boatswain.

As he spoke he caught sight of Olan Oleson, who had not gone swimming, but had continued to chew his quid in sullen silence. An evil smile of satisfaction lit up the Norwegian's face, much to Cal Vincent's disgust. "He wouldn't like anything better

than to see poor Striker and the boy sent to Davy Jones' locker," he muttered.

And now let us find out what really had become of Larry and his friend. As has been told, the hands of both went up to the gunwale of the yawl simultaneously ; then came the shock and the flying splinters, and Larry felt himself drawn under, his feet caught in the curl of something cold and slippery.

"A shark — I am lost !" was his agonizing thought, and he bumped up against Striker. The tail of the sawfish slapped first one and then the other, and it was a fortunate thing that the creature had its saw fast in the boat, otherwise one of them might have been killed.

Larry was now out of breath, yet he kept his mouth closed, knowing that if he swallowed any of the ocean's brine his senses would surely forsake him and he would be drowned. He felt for Striker, who also felt for the lad, and each clutched the other by the arm.

It was at this juncture that Captain Ponsberry came on the scene with the harpoon, and the sawfish was struck just as Larry and Striker managed to get their feet against the yawl's bottom and send them-

selves several yards off, although deeper below the surface than ever. Instinctively both struck out, and a distance equal to that already from the enemy was covered ere either dared to come up, to get a breath of much-needed air.

"Are you safe?" was Striker's first question, and seeing that Larry was, he continued, "What was it?"

"I — I — don't know!" gasped the boy. "It's pretty big, whatever it is. Oh, see, they have a line attached to it and are hauling it round to the star-board!"

They had floated to the port side of the *Columbia*, and now swam as rapidly for the ship as their exhausted condition would permit.

"On deck there! Throw us a line, if ye want us aboard!" piped up Striker.

"Gee shoo! it's the boys!" ejaculated Tom Grandon, and a rush was made by those who were not holding the sawfish. Several lines were cast overboard, and in a twinkling Larry and the tall Yankee were once more safe on board.

"God be praised for His mercies!" murmured Mr. Wells, as he helped Larry over the rail and noticed how weak the lad was. "You have had a narrow escape, Lawrence, and you, too, Striker."

"I guess it was narrow!" returned the boy, as he wiped the water from his eyes. "But what is it?"

"A sawfish, and a big one, too, according to Captain Ponsberry."

"I was afraid it was a shark," put in Striker. "Phew! the way he hit the jolly-boat was a caution! I'm afraid the boat is about done for."

But he was mistaken. During the week following, the boatswain, who was also the ship's carpenter, put several new planks and ribs into the yawl, as well as tarred and calked her, and then the small craft was as good as ever.

It was no small task to get the sawfish on board, yet by means of loops around the head and tail, made of strong ropes, it was accomplished, and the creature was laid out on the deck for the inspection of passengers and crew alike. The body was long and thin; and of a gray and white color, ending in a double fan-shaped tail. The saw, so styled, was a horny protrusion extending from the snout of the fish, several inches in diameter, and furnished along its length with long but somewhat blunt teeth, the teeth being quite close together near the point. It was not a fierce fish to look at, neither was it a handsome creature.

“He goes pretty well armed,” remarked the missionary, as he looked the fish over with much interest.

“You’d think so if you’d see him attack a whale, as I’ve seen,” replied Captain Ponsberry. “He makes a dive and a swish! and the first thing the whale knows he’s got that saw right through his belly, and then the chances are he’ll lose all interest in living; for if the first strike don’t kill, the sawfish will be off before the whale can strike back, and he’ll come on again, and there will be another ripping time. He’s a fearful fighter, for all of his meek looks. When he gets into a school of small fish, he strikes our right and left with that saw, and after it’s all over there will be dead fish everywhere. I once heard a learned professor say he was first cousin to the shark, and second cousin to the skate, a kind o’ binding link betwixt the two.”

“Is he good to eat?” questioned another of the passengers.

“Every fish is good to eat — if you like the taste of the meat,” returned the captain, sagely. “As for me, I don’t want any sawfish steaks, although I have tried ’em.”

“I’m sure I don’t want anything to eat from him,” half whispered Larry, at which Striker laughed.

“Won’t you now, Larry? Now that ain’t me — I’d much rather eat my enemy nor have my enemy eat me; hang me if I wouldn’t!”

Yet, later on, when Jeff came along to get some of the sawfish’s meat to bake over the galley fire, he was told nobody wanted any, and after preserving the saw, Captain Ponsberry had the body hove overboard.

Larry was tired out by the swimming race and by the adventure with the sawfish, and he was glad enough, after examining the fish, to lie down in his berth and take a rest and, later on, a good night’s sleep. Striker also slept soundly, and when early in the morning a breeze sprang up and the sails were hoisted, Captain Ponsberry gave orders not to disturb them, but to let the others do the necessary work.

“They’ve earned the rest, poor chaps,” he said, “so let ’em have it.”

The prediction that an island of the Farallon de Pajaros group would be sighted inside of two days was fulfilled. At noon on the second day Captain Ponsberry, sweeping the northwestern horizon with his glass, sighted a long, low shore backed up by a hill of rocks, and at once had the

course of the *Columbia* changed to that direction. The island kept growing larger and larger, and before sunset they came close up to it, and the yawl put out to find a safe entrance to what looked like a secure harbor. The coral reefs were numerous, but after an hour's soundings Tom Grandon found a safe channel, and the *Columbia* swept in and came to an anchor.

"What a sweet smell!" were Larry's first words, as he stood at the rail, gazing at the shore, overgrown with brush, with here and there a stately cocoanut or other palm tree. "I wonder what it is."

"That is cinnamon you smell," answered Mr. Wells. "You must know that we are now approaching those islands which grow the larger part of the spices which are used throughout the world. Oceanica, as these islands are termed taken together, produces cinnamon, pepper, nutmeg, and numerous other spices. As a rule the cinnamon comes from Ceylon, but single trees of that variety are to be found elsewhere, as in the present case."

"I trust we get a chance to run ashore," said the boy, eagerly. "That looks like quite a large island. I wonder if it is inhabited?"

“That is hard to say. Certainly there are no evidences in sight to prove there are inhabitants, yet there may be some natives on the northern shore. There are many thousands of islands situated in this portion of the Pacific and Indian oceans, and the population is constantly shifting. You may visit an island one year and find there a considerable settlement ; go there the next year and you will find not a soul. An earthquake has come, or a dreadful storm, or an enemy, or, mayhap, the inhabitants have heard of a better place and become emigrants.”

“And what are the natives—Kanakas, like those at Honolulu?”

“Hardly, although you will find Maoris here, similar to the people of New Zealand, from whom the Kanakas are supposed to be descendants. The majority of the natives are Malays, but there are also millions of black, woolly-headed people, known as Papuan negroes, and, of course, there are on the larger islands many whites, from Europe principally, as well as Chinese and Japanese.”

“It’s a strange land.”

“Taken as a whole it is fairly well known, but there are many islands that have never been ex-

plored, and there are many spots that no sea-captain would care to visit, for fear his ship would fall into the hands of pirates. But, thanks be to God, who watches over us all, this great, unknown world is slowly but surely giving itself over to Christianity, and with Christianity will come civilization in its best form. I do not fear for the future, although at present the horizon is sometimes dark," concluded the missionary, reverently.

CHAPTER XIII

AN ISLAND NOT ALTOGETHER DESERTED

“HURRAH! here we are on land once more! How good it feels to put one’s foot on old Mother Earth after being on shipboard so long!”

It was Larry who uttered the words. He and a number of others had received permission to go ashore, to take a tramp around previous to filling the water-casks. In the party were Tom Grandon and Cal Vincent, and both were armed, the one with a rifle, and the other with a shotgun, ready to bring down anything in the shape of game which might appear.

“I enjoy the shore myself, Larry,” answered Luke Striker, who was trudging along beside the boy, up the beach strewn high with shells and bits of broken coral. “But the cap’n says as how we must keep our eyes peeled for natives. Some of ’em ain’t none too friendly in these parts.”

“It looks as if there wasn’t a human soul in

sight or hearing outside of our own party, Luke. Just listen ; there is nothing to be heard but the booming of the surf and the cries of the tropical birds."

"You don't reckon that a native who was an enemy would come on to you blowing a fish-horn, do you?" answered the Yankee sailor, disdainfully. "No, sirree ; he would come as sly as a cat figurin' on catchin' a mouse. It's their way, so I've heard, although I allow as I never yet met an enemy out in these parts, and I spent several years here."

The sun had come out strong and hot, and the whole party were glad enough to avail themselves of the shade that the tall bushes and stately palms afforded. Soon the strip of beach came to an end. Beyond was a series of rocks, one apparently toppled upon another, and all thickly overgrown with trailing vines. The boatswain, who was in front, came to a halt.

"This channel ends here," he said. "I don't know about cuttin' through yonder reefs!" and he pointed to the rising rocks.

"Oh, let us go ahead," cried Larry. "See, the rocks seem to lead to the top of the island. If we once get up there, we'll be able to look all around and down on the other side. Come on."

The boatswain demurred, but Striker, Vincent, and the others were with Larry, and so they began to mount the rocks,—a difficult undertaking, as they realized long before the top of the elevation was gained. One had to push the other, holding on to the vines in the mean time, and Hobson suffered a slip and a tumble which for several minutes deprived him of his breath. His clothing was much torn, especially his trousers, and at this the Englishman grumbled not a little.

“It’s just my luck!” he said. “If I had a wife to sew ’em up, it would not be so bad, but when we get back to the *Columbia*, it will be myself who can set down with the wearisome needle, and nobody else.”

“Never mind, Hobson,” laughed Larry. “I won half of those trousers at the swimming match, and I’ll give you my leg if Striker will give you his.”

“Since one leg will do me small good, seeing I’m not stumping on a cork yet, he can have the leg,” answered the Yankee. “It’s a heap sight better nor cuttin’ ’em in half with the shears, as Captain Ponsberry suggested, when the parson wanted to know who was to get the prize.”

At the remembrance of this bit of pleasantry on

Captain Ponsberry's part, the whole party laughed, and on they went again in improved humor. Larry and Striker were slightly in advance, and seeing the end of the elevation just ahead, the boy made a dash to reach it first.

"Here we are, and well worth the climb!" he exclaimed, as he gazed around. "What a beautiful view! I wish one of us had borrowed the captain's spyglass."

A grand panorama was spread before and around them. On the opposite side of the elevation the slope was more gradual, and here tall grass, wild flowers, and shrubs grew in endless profusion, the flowers in all the gorgeous colors of the rainbow, and giving forth such a rich scent that it was almost sickening. Half way down the hill a large spring gushed from under a heavy rock, forming a tiny stream leading into the ocean beyond. On the left and the right were thick forests, principally of teak wood, ending in a series of coral reefs stretching forth from the island proper for the distance of quarter of a mile.

"Don't see any natives," remarked Vincent, who had followed Larry and Striker. "Do you?"

Striker was staring at a small clearing to the

northwest. "Am I mistaken or is that a hut over there?" he questioned, pointing with his long forefinger in the direction.

All of the party took a long look. Larry and Striker were of the opinion that it was a hut, while the others thought it must be nothing but a peculiar formation of brush.

"Certainly there are no natives in sight," said Hobson. "Now we have come so far we might as well go down, and sample that spring as we pass."

This was agreed to, and after a brief breathing spell they set off, Larry and Striker again in the front. Going down had looked easy, but they got many a tumble and were glad enough to rest again when the spring was gained.

"It's mighty good water, but we can't bring the casks up here," remarked Vincent, as he swallowed a goodly portion of the cooling liquid. "The cap'n or some one of us will have to locate another spring nearer the ship."

In a few minutes they resumed the journey. The object Striker had pointed out was now in plain view, and they saw that it was indeed a hut, and no small one either. The shelter was at least

eight feet wide by fifteen feet long, and seven feet high at its lowest end. It contained a window on the side towards them, and beneath this was a rude bench made of a tree slab set upon flat stones. More than this, as they came closer, they discovered a stone fireplace in front of the hut, upon which rested an iron pot and several very rusty tin dishes.

"Somebody's camp!" cried Striker. "And a white man's—I'll wager a month's pay. But he ain't been here for a long while, not by the general look of things."

"No, I don't believe a soul has been near this place in a year," said Hobson. "Why, look at the spider webs; they tell the tale without anything else. Hullo, look there!"

He pointed to the side of the hut, where, on a projection, hung a dilapidated sailor's jacket, much the worse for exposure to the wind and weather. Beneath the jacket, half buried in the mud, rested a sailor's hat.

"That settles it," muttered Striker. "Whoever lived here is either dead, or else some friendly ship chanced along and took him off."

"I wonder if he left anything behind him?" put

in Larry, after a pause. "Let us take a look into the hut."

"Beware of spiders and centipedes," said Vincent, warningly. "Those creatures in these parts are not to be trifled with." And he broke off a bush branch with which to clear the doorway.

"Oh! Look out!"

Several uttered the words simultaneously, and on the instant there was a wild scattering in every direction. Bang! went Tom Grandon's rifle, but the shot failed to hit its mark. The weapon was hurled to the ground, and the mate of the *Columbia* did not stop running until he was knee-deep in the surf before the hut—to which all of the others had led the way.

For from the interior of the shelter had glided a huge snake, brown in color, with black spots and yellow rings, and a long oval head, in which were set a pair of beady, angry eyes. The reptile was all of twelve feet in length, and thicker than a man's arm, and it came forth so rapidly and unexpectedly that for the moment every one in the party was paralyzed with fear. It reached to within a yard of Larry before the lad saw it, and the back-

ward leap the youth made would have done credit to a skilled acrobat.

"That must be a boa constrictor!" cried Striker, who had been the first to lead the way into the water.

"I wonder if he can swim?" queried another of the sailors. "If he can, we aren't safe here."

"Of course he can swim," answered Grandon. "I tried my best to hit him, but I guess I didn't make it. Cal, why don't you go at him?"

The last words had scarcely left the mate's mouth when the boatswain opened fire with the shotgun, aiming directly at the upraised head of the snake, that had paused on the rim of the sea, as if undecided whether or not to undertake an aquatic pursuit. Vincent was very nervous, and the shot, instead of hitting its object, scattered on the sands a yard away.

"Missed!" grunted Hobson. "Reckon, Cal, you couldn't hit the broad side of a house with a Gatling gun."

"He is moving away, anyhow," returned Vincent, as the great snake turned and slowly glided towards the brush behind the hut.

"Give him another shot!" cried Striker. "Load



THE HOSSENAIN OFFERED FIRE WITH THE SHOOTER - PAGE 129

up and let me do the trick. Tom, where's your rifle?"

"I—I let it fall," answered the mate of the *Columbia*, sheepishly. "There it is near the fire-place."

"Better go in and get it," went on the Yankee sailor, facetiously.

"Well—I—I'll wait a bit. I don't want to be bit or hugged to death. Give him a dose of shot, if you can hit him."

By this time the shotgun was loaded again, and now Striker took it. The great snake had reached the bushes and was lying with its head concealed, but the lower half of its shiny body exposed. Taking careful aim, the Yankee sailor fired, and an instant later the reptile was seen to turn and twist in every direction, slashing the bushes as with a flail. It had been struck fairly, but the shot was by no means a fatal one. It remained in view fully half a minute, then crawled further into the brush, where they heard it continue its thrashing.

"There, I don't think he'll bother us much more," remarked Striker, as he handed the shotgun back to Vincent. "Tom, you can get your rifle now, if you want it."

The mate hated very much to make the move, but not willing to show too much cowardice, he waded ashore slowly and with extreme caution. Securing the weapon, he rushed back to the others, but the snake did not show itself again.

“Well, this looks as if we were in a pickle,” remarked Larry, who, it must be said, was as cool as any of them — although this is not saying a great deal. “Here we are, and our ship on the other side of the island, and nothing to do but to tramp through that brush and over those rocks, and perhaps stir up another of those snakes. I’ve heard they often travel in pairs.”

“No! no! you don’t catch me cutting through the brush again!” ejaculated Hobson. “That bloody reptile was too much for me. Ugh! my blood is running cold yet. If I was to meet him in the bushes, I’d die, I know I should, and I’m no more of a coward than most men at that.”

At these words each of the little party looked at the others. It was truly an uncomfortable situation in which to be placed. What was best to be done?

CHAPTER XIV

THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS AND THE REBELS

“WELL, there are only two ways of getting back,” remarked the mate of the *Columbia*, after a long pause. “One is to climb the hill, and the other is to skirt either the east or the west shore. It’s a close mile across, and I reckon it’s three miles around, one way or the other.”

“Yes, I reckon it is three miles by way of the shore,” answered Hobson. “But there is a beach most of the way, if not all of the way, and it will be easier walking on that than it will be a-climbing the rocks.”

“I say let us try the shore,” put in Vincent, who was as scared as any one. “We won’t be worried about snakes, and we’ll see more than if we went back by the way we came. The question is, which shore, east or west?”

The question was debated for a few minutes, and it was decided that, according to the view

from the top of the hill, the eastern shore route must be the shorter, and would, consequently, be the best to take, for all felt that they must now be getting back to the ship. Both the rifle and shotgun were loaded, and off they started, the two armed men in advance, on the alert to fire at the first enemy which might appear.

For the first mile nothing came to view but the ocean upon one side, and a stretch of beach and brush upon the other, backed up by the forests previously mentioned. In the brush and trees could be heard great numbers of birds, and both Grandon and Vincent would have gone in for game had it not been that the remembrance of the snake held them back. Yet they managed, by keeping wide awake, to bring down several cockatoos and a species of wild turkey, and of these they were very proud.

After the turkey was killed and slung over the mate's shoulder, another mile was covered, and then they came to a small bay, or inlet, on the other side of which was a hump of rocks, hiding the south shore, where they knew the *Columbia* must be at anchor. Striker was now again in advance, with Larry beside him.

"Avast!" cried the Yankee sailor, suddenly plucking the boy by the sleeve. "Get back there, out of sight, all of you, and I'll capture a prize wuth havin'!"

He motioned to the others, who came to an immediate halt. Looking ahead, they saw at the back of the sunny inlet several large turtles basking on the beach, their necks and legs stretched out to the fullest extent.

"Can you do the trick?" whispered Hobson. "I've heard tell it's got to be managed cleverly or the turtle will get away."

"Trust me — I've done it before — when I was ashore on Luzon!" answered the Yankee sailor. "Watch me, Larry; it's a trick worth knowing — in case ye are cast ashore some day with no food and no gun to bring it down with."

While the rest of the party retreated to the shelter of some nearby bushes, having by this time gotten over the greater part of the fright occasioned by the snake, Luke Striker crawled stealthily along the beach and entered the shallow waters of the inlet, pursuing a course which presently brought him up directly in front of the turtles, who still lay unconscious of their danger.

In a few minutes Striker had gained the edge of the beach, and here he paused, to decide the question of which turtle to attack first. There were three in a bunch, two nearly side by side and the third a few yards to the rear, while a fourth turtle lay still further back, but somewhat to the left of its mates.

Having fixed his plan of attack, the Yankee rushed forward as nimbly as his long legs would carry him, and, catching the nearest turtle by the side edge of the shell gave it a scoop which immediately placed it upon its back, with its legs squirming harmlessly in the air.

Instantly there was a commotion, and with a great flapping the remaining turtles started up, and, seeing their enemy, made a rush towards the nearest water, that beside the one turned over uttering a savage hiss at Striker as it darted by, just escaping his reach.

With the next nearest turtle gone, the Yankee leaped for the one behind the pair, which started for the water, then on seeing the sailor directly in the way, turned to move to one side. Another dexterous scoop, and this one was also helpless, and away went Striker for the fourth, now ten

yards off and making for the water at the height of its clumsy speed. It was a nip-and-tuck race, in more ways than one; for as the sailor reached the turtle, it suddenly turned, gave him a vicious nip in the leg, and before Striker could recover tumbled into the water and was gone.

"Wuow!" came from the Yankee, and for the time being his captures were forgotten, as he danced around in pain. Soon the wound was uncovered, and was found to be not unlike what an angry cat might have made. Striker lost no time in bathing it with salt water, and then with some brandy Grandon carried in a flask, doing this to avoid the possibility of blood poisoning.

The two turtles lying upon their backs were each over a foot and a half in diameter, with shells of unusual beauty, as Larry could see at a glance. They were soon put to death, and turned over, and the boy examined them with interest.

"They are hawk's-bill turtles," said Vincent. "A good catch. Do you know what this shell is used for?" he went on, to Larry.

"It looks a little like tortoise-shell."

"It is tortoise-shell, although it will need a deal of polishing before it will show up as beautiful as

it does in combs and ladies' pocket-knives, and the like. The natives take the shell off by turning the poor creatures over and making a fire under 'em while they are still alive ; but that is the wust kind of cruelty."

No time was lost, after Striker's wound had been dressed, in fastening several bits of cord to the two turtles, and while Larry and the Yankee carried one between them, the others of the party took care of the second. Crossing the hump of rocks, they came in sight of the *Columbia* as anticipated, and soon after entered the yawl and rowed out to the schooner.

"I was calculating you had got lost," cried Captain Ponsberry, when they appeared. "Humph ! A couple o' good hawk's-bills, but not much to eat."

"Aren't the turtles good eating ?" asked Larry.

"About as good as that sawfish, lad. Green turtles are the thing ; these are poor stuff, although we might try one, just for a change."

The story they had to tell about the snake was listened to with much interest. "I do not blame you for trying to keep out of the reach of those reptiles," said Mr. Wells. "If one of them caught any of the party, the unfortunate would be crushed

to a jelly and then slowly devoured. Perhaps that is what happened to the former inhabitant of the solitary hut you visited."

In coming over the hump of rocks near Turtle Cove, as Larry named the spot, they had located another spring, less than a hundred yards from shore. Upon learning of this, the schooner was towed around to the inlet, and the task of filling the water-casks began that afternoon and was completed the next day. Then up went the anchor once more, every sail was set, and the trip to Hong Kong was resumed.

Again the days lengthened into weeks, and as nothing occurred in the way of storms the voyage became as monotonous as before. The only break was on Sunday, when the Rev. Martin Wells held a regular church service, morning and evening, which all were glad to attend, some, among whom was Larry, because they thought it the proper thing to do, and the others because the missionary was a good speaker and it helped to pass the time. Even Olan Oleson attended, but it is doubtful if the sermons and prayers affected the wicked-minded Norwegian, who was plotting continually to revenge himself upon Larry and Striker.

Mr. Wells was much pleased to see what an interest Larry took in his work, and how ready the lad was to lead in the singing of the hymns, and the two became better friends than ever. The missionary had long since heard the story of the boy's trouble at home, and while he did not exactly approve of what had been done, yet he felt it a hard task to offer any censure, considering how Larry and his brothers must have suffered through the loss of their mother and the breaking up of the home. He advised Larry to write a plain straightforward letter to Job Dowling from Hong Kong, telling of what he had done, and then to hope for the best.

"You'll feel better for having written, mark my words," he concluded. "And your uncle ought to know where you are, in case anything happens to you." And Larry promised that the letter should be written.

As the time sped by, the vast Pacific Ocean was left behind, and they began to crawl slowly but surely into the South China Sea, at a point directly below the most southerly extremity of the island of Formosa.

"It won't be many days now before our trip comes

to an end," remarked the missionary to Larry, one hot, starlit evening, as the two lounged along the starboard rail, wondering when the coast of Formosa would be sighted. "The distance from South Point on Formosa to Hong Kong is not much over four hundred miles."

"This is the island from which the famous Formosa teas come, I suppose?" said Larry.

"Yes, the island is famous for its teas, and tea-growing is its main industry, although, I believe, rice is also raised to some extent."

"Striker was telling me that the Philippines are directly south of us," went on the boy. "He has visited Luzon, which he says is the largest of the group."

"Yes, Luzon is the largest island, and upon that is situated Manila, the principal city. There are a great number of islands, some navigators placing the figure at thirteen hundred, but many of these are mere bits of coral formation and uninhabited. The islands of any consequence, and which are peopled, number in the neighborhood of four hundred."

"Four hundred! Well, that is enough, I'm sure."

The missionary smiled. "Yes, that is enough, yet you must remember that the Philippines are only

one group of islands out of many in Oceanica. How many islands there really are will, perhaps, never be known; for many of them are of volcanic origin, and rise and sink as volcanoes burst forth or earthquakes occur."

"That wouldn't be very nice, if a fellow should happen to be around at the time."

"Thousands of the natives have lost their lives through the actions of the volcanoes and the earthquakes, as well as by the tidal waves which very often accompany such phenomena. But there are millions more to take the places of the lost ones, and so, poor creatures, they are never missed. I presume the Philippines will be of unusual interest to the Americans in case the blowing up of the *Maine* should lead to a war with Spain."

"Why should they be?"

"Outside of Cuba and Porto Rico, the Philippines are Spain's only colonial possessions of value, and I have heard it stated that the Philippines are among the richest islands in the world, being, on account of their volcanic origin, full of precious minerals. Besides this, large quantities of hemp are grown here, out of which manila rope and manila paper are made."

“And does Spain rule the natives here as badly as she rules the Cubans?”

“Yes, every bit, if not worse. Uprisings are frequent, and Spain has a regular standing army quartered in and around Manila, Bulacano, and other cities. Even now the natives are in a state of revolt, under the leadership of a General Aguinaldo. The natives have put up with the iron hand of tyranny for years, and should they ever win what they are fighting for, it is likely every Spaniard on the islands will be butchered.”

Larry shuddered. “Coming from the States, one would scarcely dream of such horrors, Mr. Wells.”

“That is true, Lawrence; but, as I told you in a previous talk, Spain has only herself to blame for all this. She has misused these people for centuries, and now must take the consequence. I can scarcely believe it, yet only a short while ago I received several letters from Manila and Hong Kong giving the details of a fearful slaughter of rebels whom the Spanish troops in Luzon had captured. There were over a hundred of them, and the poor fellows were taken to the Lunetta, a favorite concourse outside of Manila, where in the presence of thousands of people, including women,—I cannot call such

immodest creatures ladies, — the victims were bound, drawn up in a long line with the Spanish details behind them, and, at a given signal, were shot down like so many dogs. Our missionary at Manila mentioned one of the number in particular, a young fellow not over eighteen years of age, in whom he had become greatly interested. The poor boy was drawn up in line with the rest, but was not killed at the first volley, nor at the second, and at last a Spanish surgeon who was on duty there ordered one of the soldiers to come up close with his gun and finish the poor lad, and this was done in a manner I would not care to put into words. When such things occur, is it any wonder that those who are oppressed rise up determined to either throw off the yoke of tyranny or give up their lives in the effort?"

CHAPTER XV

ALONE ON THE CHINA SEA

SOUTH POINT, the lowest extremity of Formosa, was passed on the following day, a mere speck upon the horizon, and then the bow of the gallant *Columbia* was turned directly for Hong Kong.

As one day after another went by, the weather, which had heretofore been nearly all that could be desired, changed with great suddenness. One day it would be blazing hot, so hot that no one could stand it on the deck during midday; the next it would be cold, with high winds and a driving rain from the northward, which sent the schooner scudding southward under bare poles, and caused every stick of timber to creak and groan in a manner new to Larry's ears.

"I knowed we would pay up for all that niceness," grumbled Luke Striker, as he came into the forecastle one afternoon drenched to the skin. "We're going to have a spell of the dirtiest weather you ever saw; mark my words."

"It can't be any worse than it is just now," answered Larry, who was holding on to the edge of his berth to keep himself from sliding to the floor. "My gracious! I thought a while ago the *Columbia* would go clean over! It wouldn't take much sail to pull a stick out of her just now."

"We won't fly a rag for forty-eight hours," put in Hobson, who had followed Striker in. "It's a regular hurricane, and we can be thankful if we keep right side up."

At that moment Olan Oleson approached the doorway from outside. The big Norwegian was as wet as any of them and in a worse humor than usual. In his arms he carried his great-coat, which for some reason he had just taken off. As Larry looked up at him, he swung the dripping garment around and hit the boy fairly across the face with it.

"You tak dat!" he cried. "You no laugh at me for nothank!"

"What do you mean by that, Oleson?" spluttered Larry, as soon as he could speak. "I wasn't laughing at you. I just looked up to see who was coming in."

"I know better—you shut your mouth," blus-

tered Oleson, and then out of pure ugliness of temper he attempted to hit Larry again.

But now the boy was on his guard and dodged. Then he caught hold of the great-coat and attempted to pull it from Oleson's grasp. The Norwegian held fast, and a sharp but short tug-of-war ensued, coming to a sudden termination when a ripping sound was heard and the coat began to tear up the back.

"Now see what you do!" fumed Oleson, as Larry released his hold. "You spoil dat coat. I mak you pay for him!"

"It's your own fault," was the quick answer, as Larry wiped the water from his face. "You had no business to hit me."

"That's right, Oleson; it wasn't fair," broke in Striker.

"You kap out of dis, or I mak you!" shouted the Norwegian, almost beside himself with rage. "He tear de coat and he pay for him. I show you!"

He dashed the garment on his berth and leaped upon Larry. The boy tried to escape, but there was no room in the narrow fore-castle, and down he went over a stool, with Oleson on top of him.

The fall was a bad one, and Larry's back might have been broken had not both Striker and Hobson interfered and hauled Oleson off.

"Lat go me!" screamed the Norwegian. "Lat go!"

"I will — when you promise to behave yourself," returned Striker. "You're a nice brute to tackle a mere boy like Larry."

"Lat go! I report you to de captain."

"Do it, and welcome," were Striker's words, and giving a sudden twist, he threw Oleson down and sat upon him. The Norwegian squirmed and fumed, but all to no purpose.

How far the quarrel might have gone there is no telling. But now an interruption came — an interruption so terrible that for the time being all else was forgotten.

As I have mentioned, the rain and wind were both high, but up to this time the electrical disturbances in the sky — so common to this locality — had been comparatively insignificant. Now, however, there came without an instant's warning a blinding flash of lightning which blazed upon every part of the *Columbia*, followed instantly by a crack of thunder which to Larry sounded like the crack of doom.

"Oh!" cried the boy, and fell back a few paces into the arms of Hobson. He could say no more, nor could any of the rest. Silently Striker leaped from Oleson, who scrambled to his feet, and then came another crash, which set Larry's every nerve into a quiver.

"We're struck!" screamed a voice from outside. "On deck, men! on deck!"

"Struck!" gasped Larry. "Oh, I hope not!"

"Gosh, but that was a corker!" burst out Striker, regaining his breath. "Never heard quite sech a hard crack afore."

He darted out of the forecastle, and the others followed him. The lightning had left all behind it almost as dark as pitch, and no one could see where to go.

"Hold tight, or you'll be blowed overboard!" came from Hobson. "Where are we struck?" he yelled as hard as he could, in order to make himself heard above the whistling of the wind.

"The foremast is hit, and the bow's afire!" came in Tom Grandon's voice. "Quick, boys, out with the fire-hose and start up the pump. Remember, the oil pantry is close to the blaze!"

"The oil pantry! God be with us!" The words

came from the Rev. Martin Wells. "Let me help at the work, mate ; the sooner we put the fire out, the better."

"All right, sir," answered Grandon. "But have a care, or you'll roll overboard. See, men," he went on, "the mast is afire ; that is, what is left of it. Hobson, Roddy, get the axes and chop it away. Striker, bring the hose around the mizzenmast and over to larboard. It's a wonder some of you men forward weren't knocked out. The poor captain's senseless. Oleson, help Striker with that hose, and you, too, Larry. Vincent, cut the ropes with a knife, or an axe, if you've got one. The rest of you screw the hose to the pump and turn on the water. I'll chop this woodwork away so you can get at the fire below." And crash ! crash ! went Tom Grandon's axe, as he worked away manfully, while the crew scurried off in all directions, to do as ordered.

Striker had already run for the hose, and soon several lengths were unreeled, and not only Larry and Oleson, but also the missionary, took hold to drag it forward. The larboard rail was just gained when the *Columbia* gave a sharp lurch, and down went the three men and the boy in the scupper-

hole. Oleson came on top of Larry, and took grim delight in planting the heel of his rough boot on the lad's neck.

"Get off of my neck, Oleson!" cried Larry, and then Striker hurled the Norwegian back and scrambled up. He had just reached for the rail, when, muttering some fierce imprecation in his native tongue, Oleson caught Striker by the leg and flung him over the side! For one second the Yankee sailor seemed to hang in mid-air, then with a wild cry he disappeared into the boiling waters beside the vessel.

"Striker!" gasped Larry. "He will be drowned! Hobson! Vincent! Mr. Grandon! Come here! Oleson has thrown—"

He was permitted to go no further, for the Norwegian had now turned and caught him by the throat. "You can a-go wid him!" hissed the infuriated rascal, and forced the alarmed boy over the rail. In vain Larry tried to cling fast; Oleson beat off his hold, and down he went into that same tempest-tossed element, out of sight and hearing of those who were hurrying to answer his call.

How far down into the depths of the China Sea

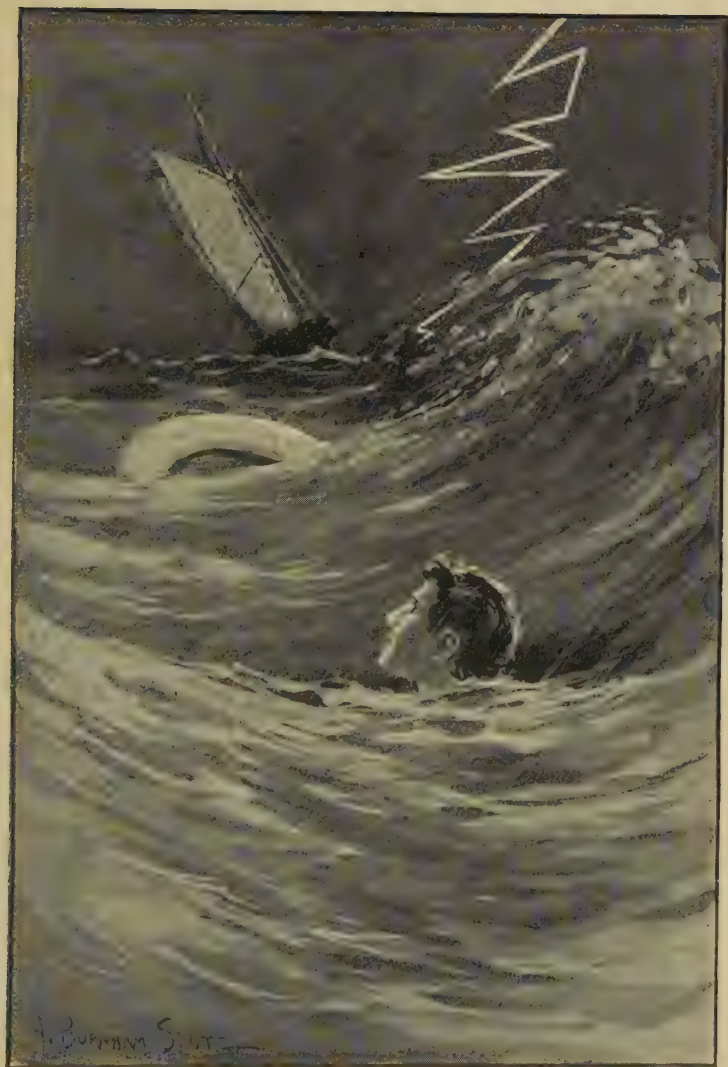
Larry descended he never knew, but it was to him a long distance. Instinctively he closed his mouth and held his breath as he felt the warm currents shift and swirl around him. Was he being drawn down under the *Columbia*? Fervently he prayed not.

When he did come up, to puff and blow like a porpoise, all was dark around him. He was on the top of a huge wave; a second later he went down into a great hollow, the waves before and behind him seeming like hills ready to tumble in and plunge him out of existence. Again he prayed a silent prayer — yet none the less heard — that his life might be spared to him.

A minute later came another flash of lightning, revealing two things apart from the waste of water around him. One was the *Columbia* fast receding in the distance; the second was a life-preserver some thoughtful friend had thrown overboard after him.

“Gone!” he murmured, with a sinking heart. “Will they come back? Oh, they must come back! They won’t desert Striker and me like this!”

The life-preserver floated but a short distance



THE LIFE-PRESERVER FLOATED BUT A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY

away, yet it was no easy task to secure it amid those mountainous waves. He struck out valiantly, guided by the flashes of lightning which followed. He was all but exhausted when he finally gained the article and adjusted it under his arms. With the preserver, floating was easy.

The seconds lengthened into minutes after that, and the minutes into hours, and still he floated aimlessly about, the sport of the wind and the waves. Sometimes a wave would break over his head, almost knocking out of him the little breath that remained. The rain came down as hard as ever, but the lightning and thunder became less frequent, and finally died away altogether, leaving him to the utter blackness of the night.

It was a time never to be forgotten, a time stamped indelibly upon Larry Russell's memory, that lonely night on the China Sea, floating he knew not where, fearing that even if he kept afloat until daybreak no one would come to his rescue, but that he should continue to drift until hunger and thirst should claim him as their own. "Oh, God, help me!" he cried, not once but many times; yet only the whistling wind seemed to answer in mockery.

CHAPTER XVI

CAST ASHORE ON AN ISLAND

“NOT a bit of land nor a sail in sight !”

Such were the disheartening words which escaped Larry's lips when the morning had dawned, and he had taken a long and careful look around, as one wave and another lifted him up to the level of the dark green mountains shifting around him.

The long stretches of the night, coupled with the fury of the elements, had thoroughly exhausted him, and it took all the little will-power left to keep from dropping over into a sleep which would surely have ended in death.

The morning sun glinted over the waves, flashing and flaring in his eyes, and then began to mount the skies and pour down those scorching rays upon his uncovered head. Soon this brought to him the first of the added perils of which he had thought — that of thirst. Never was he so dry before — with millions of tons of water around him ! He was almost

tempted to drink of the salty water, but resisted, knowing full well that if he did so, his thirst would be tenfold increased.

Where would it end?

Over and over again he asked himself that question without being able to devise an answer. Would not some friendly sail appear, or some tiny coral island — one of those many of which the missionary had spoken? Thinking of Mr. Wells made him think of the *Columbia*. Surely, surely, his friends on board of her would not desert him. But then his cheeks blanched as he thought of the storm and the fire. Had the gallant craft fallen a prey to one or the other, after all? It might be, for ships had been struck by lightning and gone down before.

Towards noon, with the fierce sun directly overhead, he felt that the end must be near. His mind was in a whirl, and fearful visions came to him: now he was battling with the sawfish, then the great snake was coming through the water after him, and anon Oleson had him by the throat and was choking him. The last vision seemed so real that he cried out as loudly as his parched throat would permit, "Help! help! somebody help me!"

What was that? an answering call? No, no, it

must be another hallucination. Yet he strained his ears eagerly, and screamed again. No, it was no deception; the call was returned, and the voice sounded sweetly familiar. He was down in a hollow, and waited eagerly to mount the coming wave. Up he went, and still up, to come in contact with a bit of wreckage—the fore-topmast of the *Columbia*, with its trailing ropes. As he caught the end of the mast, he saw that the centre supported a sailor's body.

“Luke Striker!”

“Larry Russell! Is it possible!” came from the Yankee tar. For the moment he could scarcely believe his eyesight. “How did this happen? Did the *Columbia* go down?”

“I don't know about that,” answered Larry, moving closer to his friend. “Oh, how glad I am that we have come together!” he exclaimed, his wet face beaming with pleasure. “It's awful to be alone.”

“So it is, Larry, and I was thinking just that same when I heard your call. But how is it you are here if you don't know about the fate of the *Columbia*?”

“Oleson pitched me overboard. When you went over, I started to call for help, and he turned on me like a flash; and here I am.”

“And you don’t know about the craft — if she is O. K. or not?”

“I am afraid something must have happened, for Captain Ponsberry wouldn’t desert us like this, would he?”

“Cap’n Ponsberry was knocked out by the lightning — don’t you remember Tom Grandon sayin’ so? But Tom wouldn’t desert us; I know him too well. Yes, I’m afraid the ship has had a tough time of it, and maybe she’s at the bottom of the China Sea this minit.” Striker drew a deep breath. “We’re in a pickle, lad, jest about as deep as we can git!”

“I know I am dying for a drink. Oh, if only we could sight land somewhere! Are we far from Formosa?”

“Formosa? Why, lad, we’ve been driving southward as fast as we could for forty-eight hours. We are closer to some o’ the Philippines nor anything — though I allow as they must be miles an’ miles away. Yet I’m prayin’ myself we may strike some land afore we see Davy Jones’ locker.”

With some of the dangling ropes Striker had made himself a sort of seat beside the mast, and now Larry went to work, on the opposite side, to do the

same for himself. This accomplished, he rested far more comfortably than before. While he was at work, the Yankee sailor took another rope which was slender, and began to twist and braid it into a shell-like head covering, similar to one he had already made for himself. The dampness and shade of the improvised hat made Larry's head feel much better.

Slowly the afternoon wore away. Towards evening the sun went behind a dense mass of angry clouds, and it began to rain as before, while the distant rumble of thunder crept closer and closer. An hour later the storm was on them in all of its fury, and they found themselves driving to the southwestward, over and through the boiling and lashing waves which threatened to engulf them forever.

"I can't stand much of this!" panted poor Larry, at about midnight. "My chest is pounded so sore I can hardly breathe. Every time a wave breaks over me I — Oh, Luke, look!"

A broad spread of lightning had lit up the scene around them, causing Larry to suddenly change his talk.

"What is it, Larry?"

"Land! just ahead of us! We are getting into the breakers already!"

He spoke the truth, and a second later another flash of lightning gave Striker an opportunity to take in the situation.

"You're right, my lad. Quick! unfasten yourself from that rope and hold ready to let go, or you may be smashed to jelly between the mast and the rocks. See, we are already passing over an outer reef. Look out, and if your feet touch the beach run as hard as you can from the undertow!"

Striker fairly screamed the last words, in order to make himself heard, for the pounding of the surf was like the booming of cannons around them. Up they went to the top of the last wave, and then down and down until the feet of both touched some hard substance. The spray was flying in every direction, while the brine was lashed into a thick foam. Larry tried to keep his feet, but failed utterly, and rolled over and over, he knew not whither. The mast, which had slipped from him, bumped his arm, and, without thinking of what he was doing, he clutched the tangled-up ropes. Then came a second rise, and he was swept in closer than before. The receding waves left him but knee-deep in the element. A flash of lightning showed him in what direction safety lay, and he

ran with all the power left to his legs. Once he went down on his hands, and the next wave nearly caught him, but he was up again in a trice, and in a moment more was safe on the rocks which arose directly behind the storm-beaten beach.

"Luke! are you safe?" were the first words he uttered, as soon as he could catch his breath.

"I am, and thank God for it!" came from the Yankee sailor, and presently he appeared out of the darkness. "That was a close shave, lad, wasn't it? I came near to striking on my head."

"It was a close shave," answered Larry, and added reverently: "We have much to thank Heaven for, haven't we?" Somehow, that time of extreme peril was deeply impressed upon his youthful mind.

"Yes, lad, God has been with us this night, no doubt of it. We couldn't have stood it much longer drifting in that sea. Let us get a little further back, under the shelter of yonder overhanging cliff; and there we can take it easy until morning."

Both had dropped upon the rocks, too exhausted to stand, but now they managed to reach the base of the cliff Striker had mentioned, and here they

found a sheltered nook. Close at hand was a pool of rain-water, of which both partook eagerly.

Half an hour later found the pair asleep — sleeping the heavy sleep of the over-tired, — undisturbed by the thunder in the skies or on the beach. They knew not where they had landed, nor did they care. It was enough to know they had struck land, and an island that was not barren, but covered with tropical growth, as the flashes of lightning had revealed.

Striker was the first to awaken in the morning. He opened his eyes to find the storm cleared away and the sun shining brightly. Larry lay at his side, the boy's curly head resting upon his wet arm, slumbering as soundly as ever.

"I'll let him sleep until he wakes up — no use to 'rouse him," thought the Yankee sailor, and got up himself. He was stiff and sore, and it was several seconds before he felt in the humor to set off on a tour of inspection. Before going, he brought from one of his pockets a water-proof match-safe, and was delighted to find therein eight matches all in perfect condition.

A short walk along the cliff, below and above, — for the rocky shelf was irregular, and not over

twenty feet high, — convinced Striker that no human beings were in the vicinity, to become their friends or their enemies; and then the sailor set about obtaining some food, for he was now nearly starved.

He felt certain that the storm had cast up upon the irregular beach more or less fish, and in this he was not mistaken, for hardly had he covered a distance of half a dozen rods than he heard a flapping, and saw a winged coryphene trying vainly to reach the ocean, from which it had been hurled.

“A dolphin!” he cried, making a mistake common to many sailors, who do not distinguish the difference between the two creatures. In a second he had the coryphene by the tail, and a blow upon the rocks ended the wounded one’s misery and made the prize his own. The fish was over two feet long, and weighed all of seven pounds. It was at first black and brown, but its colors soon changed to olive and azure, — a peculiarity which it shares with the true dolphin of other waters.

Fish in hand, Striker returned to where he had left Larry, and commenced to gather such brush as he could find which was dry or drying. It was no easy matter to discover wood dry enough to burn

at once; but the shelter under the cliff afforded a little, and with this he started a blaze, and soon had a roaring fire, upon one edge of which he erected a flat stone, which soon became hot enough to use for a rude pan for his fish.

It was the welcome smell of something to eat which aroused Larry quite as much as anything else. He sat up, rubbed his eyes in astonishment, and leaped to his feet.

"A fire, and a fish' frying!" he cried. "That is a welcome sight to a fellow as hungry as I am! How did you catch him, Luke?"

"It was pure luck, Larry," answered the sailor, and told his story. "The fish will be done to a turn in a few minutes, and then we can eat our fill; and I'll warrant you'll find it fine eating, and not altogether because you're so hungry, either."

"I could eat anything," was the reply. And when they sat down in the shade,—for the sun was growing hot,—Larry declared he had never tasted anything better. The flesh of the coryphene was as sweet as a nut, and they ate and ate, until little more than the bones was left.

CHAPTER XVII

THE STORY OF A LONG TRAMP

THEY had hung their jackets by the fire to dry, and by the time breakfast was finished — a breakfast that Larry declared was breakfast, dinner, supper, and lunch all rolled into one — the garments were ready to put on again. Their improvised hats were gone, but seaweed was plentiful along the beach, and soon they had fixed up a pair of rude head coverings which gave them ample protection from the tropical sun, even if they were far from handsome in appearance.

“We ain’t travellin’ on looks, lad,” said Striker, when Larry poked fun at the bonnets, as he dubbed them. “I’d rather wear this contrivance than be sunstruck.”

“Of course, Luke — I was only fooling. The question is, now we are ready to move, where are we to go to?”

“I’ve thought that over, lad, and I don’t know as we can do better nor to climb up to the highest

top of this place and git our bearings, so to speak, same as we did at that other island we were on."

"And supposing we strike another snake?" and Larry could scarcely repress a shiver.

"We'll have to chance it. But I don't believe we will. Come, we'll cut ourselves a couple of good clubs, and then mount the cliff and the hill back of it. What I am worried about more than snakes is our chance of picking up the next meal. Fish ain't layin' around all over, ye see."

"Let us run along shore then and pick up what we can," answered Larry, "or I can do so while you are cutting the clubs;" and so it was arranged.

The beach was strewn with seaweed and shells, but, as Striker had intimated, fish were scarce, and Larry picked up but one small creature of an unknown variety, and not weighing over a pound and a half. It was full of spines which stuck his fingers until they bled, and he carried the fish back very gingerly.

"Humph, not much, but better nor nuthin'," was Striker's comment. "I'll wrap it in wet seaweed and sling it over my back. Here is your club, lad, and use it as best you can, if anything attacks you, be it snake, wild animal, or a blood-thirsty savage."

"Do you think this island inhabited?"

"That depends a good deal on the size. If it's large, yes; if it's small, no."

"Is it one of the Philippines?"

"I reckon it is; some small place directly to the north of Luzon. But come on; we want to make the most of the forenoon, because by eleven o'clock it will be too hot to travel."

In a moment more they were on the way, climbing the cliff and pushing up a gradual slope covered with rank tropical growth, steaming from the rain which had fallen upon it. For the greater part, the growth was of coarse grass, knee-high and more, but here and there were thick clumps of bushes, gorgeous with colored flowers and odd-looking berries, not a few of a poisonous nature. Still farther on was a heavy belt of stunted palms, with vines training in every direction, and here flitted, in surprise and terror at their appearance, wild pigeons, hornbills, as well as parrakeets, cockatoos, and other varieties of parrots.

"My, but it's hot!" murmured Larry, as they came to a rest under the palms. "And how everything does grow in these hot places!"

"Yes, it grows, but a good bit of it is mighty

coarse," responded Striker. "Take that grass we've just come through, for instance. I don't believe a horse or a cow would touch it any more than it would a lot of old chair canings."

"And just look at the bugs, and beetles, and ants, and lizards!" went on the boy, pointing to the ground and the rocks about them. "I don't believe a fellow could pass a night here very comfortably."

"Not unless he slept in a tree, Larry — although I allow as it wouldn't be no wuss nor some sailors' boarding-houses I have put up at," and Striker laughed heartily. "Come." And on they went again.

Before the top of the hill was gained they had to pass over a rocky stretch of lava formation. Here Striker pointed out the different strata of the flow.

"This island is of volcanic origin, as the parson would put it," he said, "but I reckon the last eruption was a long while ago, judgin' by the trees. Perhaps we'll run across the volcano crater somewhere up there at the top."

The top of the hill was not as regular as that upon the other island visited, and in order to get a view of their surroundings they were compelled to climb a palm tree. From here they could get a fair

view of the ocean, and saw that the island was about three miles in diameter. The crater of the volcano lay just in front of them, — a ragged depression, its centre depths covered with thickly matted vines.

“Looks like a big, round cake that went away up in the baking and then split just one side of the middle,” remarked Larry. “Do you suppose there is any bottom to that crater?”

“To be sure, though there’s no telling how far down it is. I ain’t calkerlatin’ to investigate — not jest yet. Do you see anything of a hut or a village?”

“Not a sign of any habitation.”

“Neither do I.” The face of the sailor fell. “We might as well go round the crater and down behind it, and then, if we want to, we can walk along the shore.”

The walk down the hill was easy, and they continued their progress even during the midday hour, although stopping numerous times to rest. They had almost gained the water’s edge again when Striker pulled Larry by the arm to attract his attention.

“We’ll want something to eat soon, and I’m goin’ to have something besides fish if I can get it.

Yonder is a flock of wild pigeons. We might take a shy at them with our clubs. Come on, as quietly as you can, and when I whistle let drive."

They crept forward side by side, to the spot the Yankee tar had pointed out. When within fifty feet of the birds Striker uttered a low whistle, at the same time letting his club whiz through the air. Both sticks flew true to the mark, and a tremendous fluttering followed. One of the pigeons was knocked dead and three others injured. Of the three, two were readily caught; the third got away among the trees.

"Three birds; not half so bad," cried Striker. The prizes were slung on a string over Larry's back, and on they went again.

Evening found the pair down at the seashore. They had skirted one half of the island without seeing the first sign of a human being. They were utterly worn out, and were only too glad to take it easy, kindle a fire, and cook the fish and the pigeons. The latter proved of rather a rank flavor, judged by the flesh of those eaten at home, yet neither complained.

"I'll have to be careful of my matches," observed Striker, as they proceeded to make themselves com-

fortable for the night. "The six I have left won't last forever. Let us see if we can't keep the fire; and he banked it up with some thick brushwood in such a fashion that it might burn slowly.

The night was spent under the shelter of several dwarf palms which grew close to a rocky elevation overlooking the sea. All went well until nearly dawn, when Larry was suddenly awakened by the movement of something around him.

"Hullo, Luke, what's up?" he cried, when he caught sight of something between himself and the Yankee sailor. He made a savage kick, hitting some small animal in the side, and a shrill squeak followed. Striker was by this time awake, and both leaped to their feet.

"A monkey, that's all!" cried the tar. "Get out of here!" and he made a useless pass with his foot, for the monkey was already hopping off as fast as he was able. In the dim light they made out a score of the animals sitting around them in a circle. With a wild chatter the whole tribe rushed into the trees of the forest behind them and were lost to view, although their chatterings could be heard for a long while after.

"They'll come back sooner or later; their curi-

osity won't let them keep away," said Striker, after the excitement was over. "Reckon he scared you a bit, didn't he?"

"He did," answered Larry. "I wonder if there are any very dangerous animals round?" he continued anxiously.

"It's not likely, on an island of this size. But you'll find plenty of wildcats in the Philippines, and wild boars and buffalo—a different sort from those in our Western States. And then there are civets, an animal something like a cat, that some of the natives domesticate, and the wild parts are full of jackals, so I've heard, though I never seen none of 'em."

What to do was the next question. They had explored the island as thoroughly as they cared to do it, with but scant satisfaction. Not a single trace of human beings had come to light. They looked at each other soberly.

"We are Crusoes, Luke," said Larry, soberly, "and I don't like it."

"Neither do I like it, lad. But what can we do? If we had tools, I might go in for rigging up a boat, or a raft, and setting some sort of sail for Luzon, but one can't do much with a jack-knife."

Larry heaved a long sigh. "If only we could climb the tallest tree on the island and hang up a flag of distress," he ventured. "I'd hang up the very shirt I'm wearing if I thought it would do any good."

"So would I, lad, but it's only one chance in a thousand that any one would come along to see it. Let us look at it in a business light, as shore folks call it. Here we are and likely to stay for a good bit. Let us fix us up a shelter and fill our larder, if we can, and talk of what's best to do afterwards."

So it was arranged, and the next morning they set to work to build a hut in the best spot to be found. Of course they could cut down no trees, so they built the hut among a clump of five palms, making the sides and top of brushwood, bound together with strong vines which grew in profusion close at hand.

The finishing up of his place was entrusted to Larry, while Striker went off a whole day to "fill up the larder," as he had expressed it. The Yankee tar was very successful, having brought down several birds with his club and caught a dozen fish with a line made of a string he was fortunate enough to find in his pocket. For a hook for this line he had

used a sharp thorn tied, end up, to a tough twig, bating the whole with a dazzling blue and yellow butterfly, butterflies being as numerous as were the ants and fireflies in the woods. In addition to this he had turned over one immense turtle he had found in the sun, not a tortoise-shell this time, but a more common looking creature which was, however, of good eating flavor.

“The turtle I’ll put in a mud-hole somewhere,” he said. “And as long as we have him there will be no danger of our starving. I’d put some of the fish into another hole, only they are all dead. However, I’m sure we can get fish at any time.”

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ASIATIC SQUADRON TO THE RESCUE

Two days had passed, and they had made themselves fairly comfortable on the island, when, on chancing to walk some distance up the shore in search of dry driftwood, Larry saw a sight that fairly made his heart stop beating.

“Luke! Luke! come here, quick!” he cried, as soon as he could catch his breath. “Oh, what a find!”

“What is it, Larry?” called back the Yankee sailor, and came running from the hut on the double-quick. “A boat, as sure as you’re born! Now ain’t we the lucky ones, though!”

He was right; Larry had discovered a boat,—a heavy, cumbersome craft, such as old-time merchantmen were in the habit of carrying for trading purposes among the natives. The boat lay on her side, half in and half out of the water, and had evidently washed up on the beach the night before.



THE BOAT LAY ON HER SIDE, HALF IN AND HALF OUT OF THE WATER

"It's a godsend to us, lad," went on Striker. "Come, let us pull her high and dry, before the waves have a chance to send her adrift. Why, look, she's got a small mast, and hang me if the sail ain't set! I reckon if she could spin her yarn it would be an interesting one. More than likely the men who manned her went down in one of those hurricanes, although she looks as if she's been water-logged this many a day."

It was no easy matter to pull the boat in, but the find had raised their spirits wonderfully, and they worked with a will, and once the *Treasure*, as Larry christened her, was clear of the waves, Striker took the extra precaution to tie her soaked painter to the nearest palm.

"We can't afford to lose her nohow," he said. "See, the sail seems to be in good condition, so is the stumpy mast, and I don't believe she leaks in the least. With a stock of eatables on board we can sail in her to Luzon without half trying."

"Yes, but the eatables, Luke; how can we get them? Fish and birds won't keep, and we'll have to take some water along, and —"

"You leave that to me, Larry. We know we can get all the fish and birds we want, and we can

salt 'em, and cook 'em, and perhaps we can take some of the fish along alive, by putting them in some water in the bottom of the boat. As for the other eatables, we'll skirmish around the island for cocoanuts,—which will give us eating and drinking,—and I think I saw a banana tree yesterday, and some wild onions; while as for water, I saw some bamboo on the hill, which is big and hollow, and one piece will hold at least half a pint of water, and can easily be corked up."

Larry could not help but gaze in admiration at the fellow, whose head was so full of resources. "You're a real Yankee, and no mistake, Luke," he laughed. "I believe if nothing but a plank had drifted in, you would have had a boat out of it by sundown. All right; I'm with you, and the sooner we are ready to set sail, the better it will suit me; for even if we have the luck to reach Luzon, we'll still have the job of getting to Manila or some other big town and finding a ship to take us to Hong Kong."

From that moment on work went forward briskly, and while Larry spent his time in fishing and in hunting turtles, Striker hunted up the cocoanuts and other eatables he had mentioned. Yet the

preparations for the trip took some time, and it was not until several days later that they were ready to embark.

“Good-by to Lonely Island!” cried Larry, taking off the seaweed cap he still wore. “It served us well, yet I can’t say that I care to see its shores again.”

“You’re right, lad; a Robinson Crusoe life is all well enough in books. Give me the deck of a stanch vessel, every time.”

The *Treasure* was run out across the reefs without great difficulty, and as soon as the single sail was hoisted, Striker set the course as he thought due south, although in reality, as it afterwards proved, his course was to the southwest, just a variation sufficient for him to miss the northwest extremity of Luzon.

Two days and a night were passed upon the somewhat clumsy craft without anything of special interest happening. The weather and wind remained fair, and the only thing which bothered them was the fierce sun, which beat down as pitilessly as ever. Striker had thoughtfully thrown into the boat a number of broad palm leaves, and during the middle of the day they were glad

enough to wet these and throw themselves under the shade to be had by setting the leaves up in the form of an inverted letter V—thus Λ —in the stern.

As the sun went down upon the second day, Larry noticed Striker looking anxiously to the eastward. "Yes, I'm afraid we're in for another storm," said the Yankee, in reply to a question on that point. "How soon it will come there's no telling. But it ain't far off, and we'll have to make the best of it."

The hurricane—for it was nothing less—came upon them at midnight, striking the *Treasure* heavily and sending her prow into a very torrent of water. A large amount of the water was shipped, and both fell to bailing vigorously, knowing their very lives depended upon it.

The storm lasted until daybreak, then cleared off as rapidly as it had come. But, alas! that storm had been the unmaking of the *Treasure*. The sail with its half-rotted ropes was gone, the boat had sprung a bad if not dangerous leak, and more than half of the drinking-water and eatables were gone.

"It's a sorry pickle, truly, Larry," said Striker,

soberly, as he surveyed the mischief, "and I don't know which is the wust,—the leak or the loss of the provender,—but both are bad enough."

"The loss of the sail is the worst, I imagine," answered the boy. "How are we to keep sailing without a sheet?"

"That's true; we'll have to see what we can do with our shirts. But first let us go to work on that leak," concluded Striker, and they started in before either had a mouthful of breakfast.

Quarter of an hour later found them thoroughly alarmed. The leak was growing worse. In vain they tried to mend it. The *Treasure* had been so strained by the storm she was scarcely able to hold together. Suddenly there was a cracking, and out went a plank of the bottom, and Larry found himself dropping down into the ocean. Then the clumsy craft turned over, carrying Striker with it.

For several minutes there was a splutter and a struggle upon the part of man and boy to save themselves. At length Larry caught hold of the keel of the upturned boat and drew himself up. Soon Striker followed.

"We're in for it now, lad," cried the Yankee,

dolefully. "We made a bad miss when we left that island and trusted to such a rotten craft as this."

"I'd like to know how far we are from shore now," said Larry. "All of our provisions have gone to the bottom."

"All but these," answered the tar, holding up half a dozen of the bamboo stems filled with fresh water. "It's not much to save, but a single drink of water may save our lives before we are done with this adventure."

There was but little to add in the way of talk after this. Both were too down-hearted to say much, and clung on in silence as the upturned boat drifted onward, and the rising sun mounted higher and higher in the tropical sky. Larry's head was entirely unprotected, and by noon the sun's rays seemed unbearable.

"I must have a bit of water," he said. "My tongue is like cotton, and my head feels as if it was ready to split open."

"We'll divide the water in one of the sticks between us," answered Striker; and this was done, and once again they relapsed into a moody, distressing silence. The glare of the sun on the water nearly blinded Larry, and often he closed his eyes.

It was getting towards sundown when Striker uttered a sudden shout.

"A boat! a steamship!"

"Where?" ejaculated Larry, rousing up. "I can't see anything," he went on, as Striker pointed with his finger. "I see a bit of smoke, though."

"She is well down in the water and painted dark. I can see her quite plainly."

"Oh, yes, I see her now. Do you think she is coming this way?" was the boy's next anxious question; then, before Striker could answer, he continued: "There is another steamer, over to the left! And there is another — or am I dreaming?"

He pointed this way and that, and the Yankee sailor followed the indications eagerly.

"There ain't no mistake, Larry, they're all there; and see, there's another bit of smoke off to the north'ard. We must be right in the track o' some reg'lar line, though what line I can't imagine, nor why so many of the steamships should be out here at one time," added Striker, in much perplexity.

"I don't care about that, if only one of them will come this way and pick us up."

"They are coming this way — as straight as a string," cried Striker, after five minutes of painful

suspense. "I can see all four of the vessels as plain as day, and — yes, there's another! What in the world can this mean? Larry, if I was a drinking man, I would say I had 'em bad," concluded the Yankee sailor, as he raised himself up as high as possible, his eyes meanwhile almost starting from his head.

Another five minutes passed, and the vessels came closer, until they could readily see the black smoke pouring from their funnels. The five vessels were sweeping along in almost a semicircle, and now Striker declared he could see more smoke to the rear.

"If only they see us!" cried Larry, in almost a pleading tone. "Can't we wave something? I'll try my jacket." And he slipped the garment off, and proceeded to bestride the keel of the upturned *Treasure*. In a moment more Striker was beside him, and both waved their hands like demons.

Boom! loud and clear over the sea sounded the dull discharge of a ship's gun, and they saw the smoke float away from the nearest of the oncoming vessels.

"It's a man-o'-war, that's what it is!" burst from Striker's lips. "And it's a whole fleet of 'em!"

"Yes! yes! and we are saved!" cried Larry, hysterically. "That gun was surely meant for us." They watched on for a few more minutes in silence. "Oh, Luke! see the stars and stripes! They are United States vessels, every one of them!"

"You're right, lad; they are our own Yankee ships, and we have fallen among friends. See, that big fellow is heading directly for us and intends to pick us up. This must be Commodore Dewey's Asiatic Squadron. Hurrah for Uncle Sam! Hurrah!" And Striker cheered so lustily that the men on the approaching cruiser heard him quite plainly.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MISSION OF THE SQUADRON

STRIKER was right; the war vessels approaching were the Asiatic Squadron of the United States Navy, and while the vessels are drawing closer to Larry and the Yankee tar, we will take a brief look at the noble craft which were so soon to engage in a battle to become world famous in history.

The fighting ships were seven in number, consisting of four cruisers, the *Olympia*, *Baltimore*, *Boston*, and *Raleigh*, and three gunboats, the *Concord*, *Petrel*, and *McCulloch*. Added to these were two large vessels, the *Nanshan* and the *Zafiro*, carrying between them 10,000 tons of coal for the fleet's use.

The largest of the ships was the *Olympia*, which was also the flagship. She was a fine specimen of the protected cruiser, of 5800 tons, and carrying twenty-eight guns of good size. Her commander was Captain C. V. Gridley, and her executive officer

Lieutenant C. P. Rees. It may be worth remembering that the *Olympia* was the only ship which was protected by armor, and that armor was merely a band of four-inch steel around her turret guns — quite in contrast to numerous other armored vessels that carry steel plates about them from twelve to twenty inches thick.

Next in size to the flagship came the cruiser *Baltimore*, of 4400 tons, and carrying fourteen guns. She was commanded by Captain M. N. Dyer, with Lieutenant-Commander J. B. Biggs as executive officer.

The third on the list of cruisers was the long and low-lying *Boston*, of 3000 tons, and ready to fight with ten splendid guns. Captain Frank Wildes was her commander, and Lieutenant J. A. Norris her executive officer.

The quartette of cruisers came to an end with the *Raleigh*, of about the same tonnage as the *Boston*, and mounting eleven guns, only one of large size. The *Raleigh* had just come all the way from New York to join the squadron, and was commanded by Captain J. B. Coughlan, with Lieutenant Frederic Singer as executive officer.

Of the gunboats, the *Concord* took the lead. She

was a stanch three-master of 1700 tons, carrying eight guns and rifles, and was commanded by Captain Asa Walker.

Next to the *Concord* came the tiny but sprightly *Petrel*, of only 900 tons, and carrying but four guns. Her commander was Captain E. P. Wood. The *Petrel* looked almost too small to take part in a great battle, yet later on we will see her giving the best possible account of herself.

The last on the list of the fleet was the gunboat *McCulloch*, which was not, strictly speaking, a fighting craft, but a revenue cutter, used for carrying despatches from one boat to another and to shore. The *McCulloch* carried four light pieces, principally for defence, and was commanded by Captain Hobson, of the Revenue Marine Service.

And now what had brought this squadron out in the middle of the South China Sea, to the great wonder and astonishment — not to say thankfulness — of Larry and his down-east friend? In order to answer that question we shall have to take a dip into history — a brief dip, and one that I trust will not tire even such of my boy readers as desire a story to move along “lively like.”

We have already learned how the battleship

Maine was blown up in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, and also something of the condition of affairs in that ill-fated isle at that time : how the Spanish authorities had tried in vain for three years to put down the rebellion which was raging in every quarter, and how many American citizens were suffering because of this conflict. American capital amounting to millions of dollars was invested in Cuba, and this was rapidly being lost through the confiscation and destruction of property.

Yet the American nation could stand the loss of property without waging war, hopeful that in the end Spain would make matters right. What worried the people was the cruelty practised by the Spanish authorities against the insurgents, and when in the halls of Congress it was openly declared that through Spanish misrule tens of thousands of Cuban men, women, and children were actually starving to death, the people everywhere cried out that this must stop, and if no other civilized nation would take a hand, the United States must step in alone and do the work.

The climax of resentment against Spain came when the *Maine* went down carrying two hundred and fifty-three of our gallant officers and

sailors with her. The harbor of Havana was still supposed to be a friendly one, yet the vessel had gone to her total destruction there, although Spain denied that she was in any way to blame. I may as well add here that the *Maine* and her equipment cost the nation four millions of dollars.

The cry for war against Spain came from every quarter, yet the wiser heads said that we must go slowly, must be perfectly sure of what we were doing, so that other nations might have no cause to find fault with us when the opening blow was struck. A court of inquiry was organized to learn the absolute truth concerning the *Maine*, and at the same time Congress took up the question of assisting the Cubans by sending them relief ships loaded with food and clothing.

While Larry was sailing the dreary wastes of the mighty Pacific, the climax was reached. The court of inquiry found that the *Maine* had been blown up from the outside, probably by some sunken mine, fired by electricity. As the battleship had been given her place in the harbor by the Spanish harbor-master, the fact was evident that this official had placed her directly over the mine in question; so that Spain was responsible for the loss of our ship

and our sailors, no matter if the mine had been fired without direct orders from headquarters.

The way was now clear for what was to follow. Directly after the findings of the court of inquiry had been made public, President McKinley sent an address to Congress citing the condition of affairs in Cuba, adding that Spain had lost control, and that not even the ships of a friendly nation were safe in her harbors, and recommending that immediate action be taken.

Action was taken by our Congress declaring that the people of Cuba were, and of a right ought to be, free and independent, and Spain was given a certain length of time in which to withdraw all her military and other forces from the island. At the same time it was avowed that the United States had no thought of taking Cuba for her own, but that she would protect the Cubans until they were capable of doing for themselves. Spain was given a set time in which to answer our ultimatum, as it was called, but instead of sending an answer she gave to our minister his passport, a virtual order to leave her domains, and this was equivalent to a declaration of war.

In the mean time, in anticipation of a conflict, the

navy had been active, adding a number of vessels to the list, and getting everything in readiness for a struggle, which people felt must take place largely upon the water. On April 21, when negotiations were broken off, the first of our fleets sailed for Cuba, and Havana was blockaded, the first aggressive movement of the war. Following this came the President's call for 125,000 men to serve as volunteers in the United States Army, and later still, another call for 75,000 additional soldiers. All became bustle and excitement at once, and from every city, town, and village the brave soldier lads marched away, to gather at their respective State camps until mustered into the regular service of Uncle Sam.

When the news of the destruction of the *Maine* was flashed around the world by cable and telegraph, Commodore George Dewey, commanding the Asiatic Squadron, felt that war was close at hand, and to be prepared for whatever might come he began to gather around him in the bay of Hong Kong all his available vessels, and have them put in proper fighting trim. The men under him numbered not quite 1700, all brave and hardy to the core, as representative a lot of fighting seamen as could be found anywhere, as later events proved.

Immediately after the war broke out the squadron was asked to leave Hong Kong, that being a neutral port, and took its way to Mirs Bay, some thirty miles away. At this place word was received by the commodore that he must find a Spanish fleet which was located somewhere in the Philippines and engage it. This meant a big battle, providing the Spanish ships could be found, not an easy task when it is considered that the islands number over a thousand, and that sheltered harbors are even more numerous. To find the fleet, and to be fully prepared to give it battle wherever and whenever found, was a task requiring a large amount of sagacity and wisdom.

The ships left Mirs Bay on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 27th day of April, the *Olympia* leading the van, with Commodore Dewey and Captain Gridley upon the bridge, the former viewing with a pleased eye his small but solid-looking squadron, every vessel of which shone forth stern and threatening in her war-paint of dark color.

"They ought to win out in a battle, captain," remarked the commodore, quietly. He was not a man of many words.

"They will win out, commodore," answered the captain of the *Olympia*, emphatically, "if only we

can catch sight of Admiral Montojo and his ships. It's my opinion the Spaniards will keep out of sight if it's possible for them to do so. Montojo will live in hope that matters will be squared up at home before we have a chance to smash him."

"Don't be too sure of it, Gridley; Montojo is as honest a fighter as the Spanish navy possesses. If we do come to an engagement, make up your mind that he will fight to the last deck."

The destination of the fleet was the island of Luzon, that being the most important of the Spanish holdings in the Philippines. It was the commodore's determination to search all the bays and harbors of this island first, and if the Spanish warships were not found, to then proceed to the next territory.

Once out into the China Sea, the squadron proceeded slowly; for while the larger ships could breast the waves with impunity, the tiny *Petrel* was nearly engulfed, and the two coal-boats labored along under a strain that was actually perilous.

Ever since the ships had been called together, gun and other drills had kept the men in perfect condition, but now, on the first night out, the commodore resolved to put his command to another test. The majority of the hands had retired for the night when the flag-

ship signalled forth the command, "Prepare for action!"

What a hurry and bustle ensued! Men came rolling from their hammocks and ran, but partly dressed, to their stations, bugles sounded over the waters, there came the rattle of chains and the rumble of heavy machinery, and in two minutes could be seen the dancing red and white light signals from this and that boat: "We are ready for action."

"That is as it should be," said the commodore. He was greatly pleased, and felt more confident than ever of the men under him.

It was on the day following that the lookout in the foretop announced a strange object in sight.

"It looks like an upturned boat with two men clinging to it," he called down to the officer of the deck. "It's almost dead ahead."

Powerful glasses were turned upon the object, and Larry and Striker were made out long before they themselves knew that they were seen.

As the *Olympia* was steaming for the unfortunates there was no need to give directions to change her course. When it was seen that they were waving frantically with their hands and with a jacket, the

commodore turned to the captain and ordered that a small gun be fired, "Just to let the poor chaps know we intend to pick them up," he said.

And that is how Larry Russell chanced to fall in with the Asiatic Squadron of the United States Navy, just previous to the wonderful engagement of which I am about to relate.

CHAPTER XX

ON BOARD THE FLAGSHIP "OLYMPIA"

IT was not long before the great engines of the *Olympia* came to a stop, the flagship slowed up, and from the starboard side a small boat was lowered, manned by a petty officer and a dozen bronzed jackies, as man-o'-war men are familiarly termed. The oars were straight up in the air, but at the word of command they fell into the ocean's brine, and the boat set off for the unfortunates.

"Boat ahoy!" shouted Striker, feebly, for previous cries had exhausted his wind. "You jest about come in the nick o' time. We was thinkin' very seriously o' engagin' rooms in Davy Jones' locker afore ye hove in sight."

A smile went the rounds of the sailors, but not a word was said, as it would have been against the rule. "Steady, men! a stroke more," commanded the petty officer, and the small boat slowed up and sheered alongside of the upturned *Treasure*. "Are you two able to climb in?" he went on.

"I reckon I am," answered the Yankee sailor.
"Larry, how is it?"

For answer the youth slid from the keel of the *Treasure*, and grasped the gunwale of the *Olympia's* small boat. Willing hands helped him on board, and Striker followed.

"You have done us a great service," murmured Larry. "I was afraid we were gone."

"You look played out," smiled the officer detailed to bring the pair in. "How did you chance to be wrecked?"

"It's a long story, sir. We were on board of the *Columbia*, a three-master bound from Honolulu to Hong Kong, and went overboard during a storm. We struck an island first and found that boat, and then set out to make Luzon—"

"And the plagued craft went to pieces on us," finished up Striker. "Am I right? is that the Asiatic Squadron under Commodore Dewey?"

"It is."

"Then I reckon as two Americans, born and bred, we've fallen into jest about the right hands. It was a welcome sight to see the glorious stars and stripes, I can tell you that, sir. When I made you out to be warships, I was afraid we had run next to a lot of

Chinese or Japanese craft. I ain't got no use for thet sort o' critter, sir."

"You might have done worse, man, than to fall in with the Chinese or Japanese," laughed the petty officer, after he had given the necessary orders to take the small boat back to the warship. Supposing you had fallen in with Admiral Montojo's fleet?"

"Montojo? Who is he?"

"The Spanish admiral, in command of their men-o'-war in these waters."

Both Striker and Larry looked puzzled for a moment, then a quick flash lit up the boy's dark eyes.

"Has war been declared between the United States and Spain, sir?" he ejaculated.

"It has."

"By the jumpin' Christopher, ye don't tell me!" roared Striker, his mouth open in amazement. "Real, genuine, live war?"

"Well, we calculate to make it real, genuine, live war, if we can find Montojo's fleet," laughed the officer, much amused by the tall Yankee's manner.

"And are ye on his trail?"

"I presume that is what you would call it, my man. And I don't know but that you'll have to go with us, under the circumstances," went on the officer.

There was no time to say more, for the small boat was now once more beside the flagship. The craft was attached to the davit-ropes and swung up and in, and a moment later Larry and Striker stood upon the main deck, confronted by Commodore Dewey and Captain Gridley. Finding themselves in the presence of the two commanders, Striker immediately saluted in true naval style, and Larry followed suit, not a little awed by finding himself confronted by so much marine pomp, for the commodore believed in thoroughness in naval appearance as well as in efficacy. On looking at the Yankee, the commodore's face showed a slight trace of surprise.

"Hullo, my man! I think I've seen you before," he said.

"That you have, commodore," replied the Yankee tar, much pleased at even a partial recognition. "I was sayin' to myself, in coming over in the gig, that if this was Commodore Dewey's squadron, an' the commodore himself was with the fleet, he wouldn't forget Luke Striker, as served under him on board of the *Pensacola*, in European waters, about twelve years ago. I was gunner's mate at that time, and when coal bunker No. 3 took fire—" Striker paused.

"Yes, yes, I remember you now, Striker. You took the place of the hoseman who was off duty, and crawled into the bunker at the risk of your life. I haven't forgotten that brave deed, and I'm glad, at this late day, to do you a service," and the commodore took the tar's hand and shook it heartily. "So you've been wrecked, and this lad with you? You both look worn, and those wet clothes are not as comfortable as dry ones will be." The commodore turned to Captain Gridley: "Captain, will you have them taken care of? and then I'll talk to them in my cabin. We will resume our course," and the commodore turned away.

In a minute more Larry and Striker had been turned over to a sergeant of marines, who took them below to the clothing lockers, and managed to fit them out in the uniforms of ordinary seamen. While this was going on, word was passed to the big galley, and by the time the pair were ready for it a steaming dinner awaited them in the mess-room. It is doubtless unnecessary to say that to the repast thus afforded, the boy and his down-east friend did ample justice. Indeed, Striker declared that never had victuals tasted better, and ate so much of the rice pudding and drank such a quantity of the black

coffee that he found it necessary to let out one catch in the belt about his waist.

The officer of marines detailed to look after them was a whole-souled fellow, and as they ate, he readily gave them all the information at his command respecting the cruiser and her destination. Both Larry and Striker listened with keen interest.

"You see," went on the sergeant, in the course of his talk, "we are really going to do more than smash the Spanish fleet, or take a try at it. Spain owns the Philippines, and as she has chosen to go to war, why, it's no more than right that we should endeavor to capture the islands."

"But will that be fair?" questioned Larry. "I thought the trouble was all on account of Cuba."

"So it is; but in war one side lays hands on everything it can find belonging to the other," laughed the sergeant, who rejoiced in the peculiar name of Joe Joster. "If we can do the trick, we'll bottle up that Spanish fleet first, then capture the Philippines, and then go for the Caroline Islands."

"Bottling up that fleet may not be sech an easy task," observed Striker, helping himself to another bowl of coffee, the fourth. "How many ships do ye calculate this here Admiral What's-his-name has?"

"Montejo has not less than eight or ten."

"And we have how many?"

"Seven, all told."

Striker shook his head. "That don't figure right -- exceptin' our ships outclass 'em. Everything else being ekel, it stands to reason the side with the most ships has got the best show. Ain't that accordin' to 'rithmetic, Larry?"

"I suppose it is, Luke; but then our brave American tars —"

"Will do the trick," finished Sergeant Joster. "That is what we are playing on. Roughly estimated, I think the two fleets carry about the same number of guns and the same number of men, although some think the Dons have more men than we have. But if we Americans keep up our reputation, we have nothing to fear, though, of course, the scrap won't be exactly a picnic."

"That officer in the small boat said we might have to remain on board of the *Olympia*," said Larry. "If that is so, we are bound to take part in whatever occurs, whether we want to or not."

"I should think any American lad would be glad to take part," rejoined the sergeant, quickly. "If we defeat that fleet, it will be a great glory to us, and

if we don't—well, a man can die but once, you know."

"I am willing enough to stay," answered the boy. "But I should like to know what has become of the *Columbia*," he added soberly, as he thought of the sturdy schooner staggering under the hurricane and struck by lightning, with Captain Ponsberry, Grandon, Mr. Wells, and his other friends aboard.

"Yes, lad, I'd like to know that myself," put in Striker. "And I should like to meet that furiner again. It's a pity he ain't a Spaniard, and on board one of them ships we're after."

Sergeant Joster was curious to hear their story, and as they had been treated so well by the marine, they did not hesitate to tell him.

"You are lucky dogs to escape being drowned," he said, when they had concluded. "Ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have gone down. That Olan Oleson ought to be strung up on a yard-arm, and he would be on most vessels. In the navy a man would be shot for a good deal less than he's done."

"The *Columbia* is going to remain in Hong Kong for several weeks—that is, if she got there at all," said Larry. "Perhaps the fleet will go back before that time."

"There is no telling where we are to go to, lad. The Spaniards may lead us a long chase, and the commodore is not one to give up until he has accomplished his mission."

"You are right there," said Striker, nodding vigorously, as he swallowed his last mouthful of pudding. "I knowed him as a captain before he came out here, and he is just the commander for the work they cut out for him in these parts." He turned to Larry. "How is it — full?"

"Yes, and waiting for you."

"Then we won't keep the commodore waitin' — 'tain't manners nohow. Jest show the way, sergeant, and we'll be on your heels."

In a few minutes more they were at the after-cabin of the *Olympia*. Here they had to wait a quarter of an hour, for Commodore Dewey was in consultation with several other officers. At length the officers took their departure, and they were told to go in.

CHAPTER XXI

SOMETHING ABOUT COMMODORE DEWEY

LARRY found Commodore Dewey a well-built and well-preserved man of sixty, with black, piercing eyes, and hair and mustache which had once been dark but which were now tinged with gray. The face was a stern but kind one, and the boy had not been in the commander's presence more than a few minutes before he felt at home in spite of the difference in their respective positions.

As the commodore, afterwards admiral, is to play such an important part in the future course of our story, it will not be amiss to ascertain a few facts concerning his past career,—a career full of dash, fire, "I will," and patriotism.

The future commander of the seas was born in the town of Montpelier, Vermont, on December 26, 1837. He was the son of Doctor Julius Dewey, a man who fought his own way into the world, first by teaching school to earn enough to take a course

in medicine, and then by earnest efforts to help not only himself but those around him. The doctor was the founder of the Christ Episcopal Church of Montpelier, and a man of deep religious convictions.

When George Dewey was but five years old he lost his mother, as tender and true a parent as ever boy had, and henceforth his companions of the household were his sister Mary, two years his junior, and his father. He lived in a modest cottage on a side street, and the Onion River swept through the fields in the back. It is on record that George Dewey, barefooted and oftentimes hatless, loved to play in and around that stream, and who knows but that there his first naval battles were fought, with rude wooden boats of his own jack-knife designing?

When the proper time came the boy was sent to the village school, a bare enough place, with stiff wooden benches and rough desks, upon more than one of which he surreptitiously carved the initials G. D., and received for this what was considered, in those days of the ever-present birch rod, his just reward.

Whether it be a good or bad trait, it is said that

the schoolboy was of rather a quick temper, and if anything went wrong he was for settling the dispute with his fists, and it is further related that he was generally victorious in his battles. Thus was the man's natural fighting nature shown from the start, but lest some of my young readers take this as a justification to "pitch in" at the slightest provocation, let me add that George Dewey was never known to fight unless he was positive in his own mind that he was in the right.

From his home school, the lad was sent, at the age of fifteen, to a Military Academy at Norwich, in his native State. Here he was for the first time brought into contact with things military, and he had not been at the Academy long before he wrote home that he should like to go to either West Point or Annapolis, with a preference for Annapolis. This communication caused his father much worry, for the doctor had hoped that the boy would take up the study of either medicine, the law, or the ministry. But the parent believed in letting his son choose his own future, and so he consented to George's wishes.

To get into either West Point or Annapolis is, as most boys must know, no easy matter, appoint-

ments being made either by United States senators or by the President. For a long while the lad tried in vain, but at last he was chosen as alternate to another boy. The other boy, when the time came, failed to appear for examination, and George Dewey was duly appointed.

At the Naval Academy it was found that the boy made a bright student, but that he had brought his old-time quickness of temper with him. There was a line drawn between the boys from the South and those from the North, and George was singled out as a butt for the Southern boys' jokes. It can be imagined that he stood this only for a short while. The battles that followed were short, sharp, and decisive, and after that the newcomer was left alone, although before the class graduated many of those who had been his enemies became Dewey's warmest friends.

The graduation at the Naval Academy was a trying affair, how trying my young readers will understand when I state that only fourteen out of a class of over sixty received their diplomas. Of those who passed George Dewey stood fifth—showing that he could do something else besides taking his own part.

As a midshipman the young man was assigned to the *Wabash*, and spent two years cruising in the Mediterranean, visiting at the same time many places of interest, including the Holy Land. He returned to Annapolis, to receive his final examination, in which he won third place, and then returned to his native home.

When Dewey was twenty-three years old the great Civil War broke out, and he was assigned a lieutenancy on board of the steam sloop *Mississippi*, of the West Gulf Squadron, a noble fleet of vessels commanded by Admiral Farragut. The first work of the fleet was to attempt to reach New Orleans by running past the formidable batteries near the entrance to the Mississippi River, and then by engaging the fleet beyond. This was a tremendous task, and for seven days our young lieutenant was subjected to the hottest kind of fire, which, as it was afterwards stated, he endured like a veteran. He himself is reported to have told a fellow-officer that he never enjoyed anything so much in his life. It was during this engagement that, as executive officer, he gave the quick commands which enabled the *Mississippi* to fire a broadside into the ram *Manassas* and sink her. A year later found

Dewey again on the great river, and this time his craft ran aground directly in front of the Port Hudson battery and had to be abandoned. The task of getting the sailors off in safety under a galling fire was a perilous one, but the brave lieutenant commander remained aboard until no one but his captain and himself were left.

After the loss of the *Mississippi*, the future admiral was assigned to one of Farragut's gunboats, and fought at Donaldsonville, and from there he took part in the bombardment of Fort Fisher, acting as lieutenant on the *Colorado*, and it was here that he aided so vigorously in a rush in shore to silence a part of the enemy's works that he gained a special mention for bravery.

It was in 1870 that he received his first command as captain of the *Narragansett*. He was now a married man, having one son; and two years later the one great cloud of his life came, in the loss of his beloved wife. From the *Narragansett* the captain was transferred to serve on the United States Lighthouse Board, an exacting office which he filled to the satisfaction of all. From here he went to the Asiatic Squadron, and received full command of the *Dolphin*, one of the first vessels

belonging to what has since been known as the famous White Squadron, because during the times of peace these great ships are all painted pure white. When war is declared, every warship is painted some dark color, usually a brown-green or gray or black.

Leaving the *Dolphin*, the energetic captain next took charge of the *Pensacola*, the flagship of the European Squadron, and it was on this vessel that Striker served under him. Never was a captain more beloved by his men than was Dewey, although he was strict and made every one under him "toe the mark." One thing he could not abide, and that was sullenness. An anecdote which is vouched for will not come amiss, to show the character of the commander as well as to illustrate the strictness of discipline on board of a man-o'-war.

While in command of the *Dolphin*, the lieutenant came to Dewey and told him that there was a paymaster's assistant on board who had refused to obey a certain order given to him, his reason being that it was outside of his line of duty. The black eyes of the commander snapped fire.

"Where is he?" he asked.

"On the main-deck, sir."

"Have you tried argument with him?"

"I have, sir, for ten minutes."

The commander said no more, but stalked to the quarter mentioned, where he found the man sulking against the mast. Going up quietly, he caught the fellow by the shoulder.

"You have refused to obey such-and-such an order," he said, mentioning the order in question.

"It ain't in my line of duty," grumbled the paymaster's assistant.

Again the eyes of the commander flashed fire, but he kept his temper. "I have been in the navy for twenty-six years, and have made naval affairs the study of my life. I tell you that it is the duty of every man to obey the orders of his superior officers. Do you intend to obey?"

The eyes of the man dropped, and he shifted his feet uneasily. "It ain't in the line of my duty—I didn't enlist for it," he muttered doggedly.

Without waiting a moment, Captain Dewey turned to the corporal standing by.

"Call the guard," he said briefly. "Order them to load with ball."

The necessary orders were given, there was a scurry of feet and a clicking of rifles, and a line of marines were drawn up on one side of the deck,

while the man who would not obey orders was marched to the other.

"In refusing to obey orders you are guilty of mutiny," said the commander, sternly. "The penalty of mutiny on the high seas is death. If that order is not obeyed inside of five minutes, I will order the marines to fire upon you."

The man turned white and began to tremble. Dewey calmly took out his watch and counted off the minutes, "One — two — three — four —"

"Stop — don't shoot — I'll obey!" cried the sullen one, and rushed off to do as bidden. It took him a week to get over his fright, but in the end there was no better hand on board of that ship, nor one that thought any more of the "old man," as a commander is familiarly termed.

After a term upon the *Dolphin*, Dewey returned to the Lighthouse Board and was connected with the Pacific Coast Survey. It was at this time that he was promoted to be a commodore. On the first of the year which was to see the breaking out of our war with Spain, the commodore was assigned once more to the Asiatic Squadron, and he made, as my readers already know, the *Olympia* his flagship.

And now, with this rather long, but, I trust, interesting introduction, we will join him in his cabin, where he is interviewing Larry and our down-east friend, Striker.

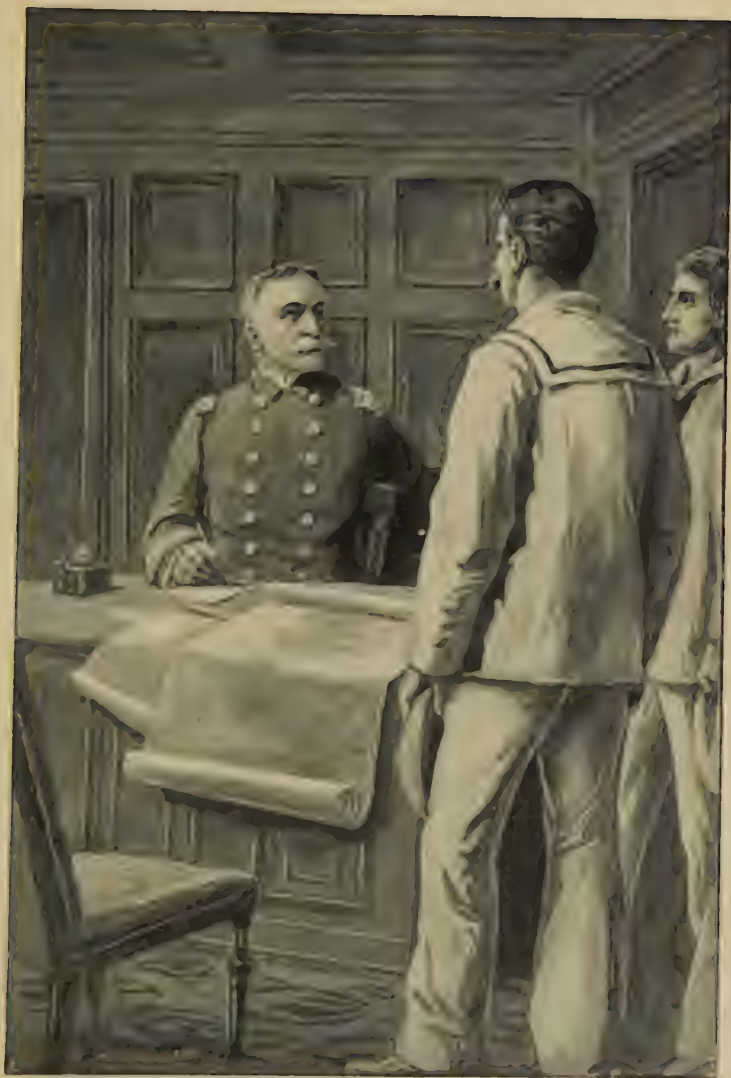
CHAPTER XXII

IN WHICH LARRY AND STRIKER ARE ADDED TO THE "OLYMPIA'S" MUSTER-ROLL

"Now tell me your tale, but you must be brief," said the commodore, after surveying the pair critically, to see if his order to fit them out properly had been obeyed.

The cabin table before him was piled high with charts, over which he and the other officers that had just left had been poring, and as Larry and Striker told their story, Commodore Dewey continued to examine the big sheets and make notes on a pad at hand. It was one of the Yankee "knacks" of the commander to be able to do several things at the same time. Larry was at first afraid that he was not listening, but he soon found out his mistake, as the officer asked him several questions bearing on points he had omitted or not made sufficiently plain.

"You have both had a hard time of it, no doubt," said Commodore Dewey, when the recital was brought to a close. "I should like to aid you in



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getting back to your ship if she has managed to reach Hong Kong, which seems doubtful, but I don't see what I can do unless we speak some vessel bound for that port. Do you know our mission in these waters?"

"Yes, commodore, we jest larned it," answered Striker, with a knowing nod of his lean head. "And, commodore, it's jest come into my mind to ask ye a favor," he went on, earnestly.

"Well?"

"Ye know how I stood in the rank o' gunners — leas'wise ye can soon find out by the record. Let me stay aboard this ship with ye an' help wipe them Spanish garlic-eaters off the face of the earth! Maybe ye ain't got no opening aboard now, but I reckon there will be openings enough after the fightin' begins."

At this earnest and original speech the commodore smiled. "You can stay if you wish, Striker, and I was going to offer you the chance, seeing that we are short a few men. I remember you were among the gunners, and it is such a position you shall fill, if you can arrange it with Captain Gridley. But what of you, my lad?" and the commander of the squadron turned to Larry.

For the past half hour the boy's thoughts had been similar to those of his down-east friend. Everything about the warship pleased him, and to behold the glorious stars and stripes floating over such a well-trained body of American tars filled his heart with patriotism. Then, too, he remembered what his brothers had written, that if war came, one intended to enter the navy and the other the army. Here was his chance to jump into active duty for his beloved country. Should he let such a chance slip by?

"I, too, will remain on board, if you will have me," he said, his clear eyes gazing fully into those which were turned upon him as if to read his very thoughts. "I have two brothers in the States who said they would go into service if there was a call to arms. I have never been on a man-o'-war before, but I am willing to learn my duty, and I'll fight for all I am worth, if I'm called on to do it."

"Good! That's the kind of talk I like to hear, Russell. The man who is willing to do his whole duty—to do exactly as he is told to do—is the man we are after. To be sure, you are rather young for regular service, but, considering the manner in which you came on board, we'll not let that count

against you. I suppose you would like to remain with Striker."

"Yes, sir — everybody else on board being a stranger."

"We'll try to fix it up. And that being settled, we'll not be on the lookout for any ship to take you to Hong Kong for the present." The commodore raised his voice and called the guard at the companionway "Ask Captain Gridley to step in," he continued.

The word was passed, and soon the captain of the *Olympia* appeared, and the situation was explained to him. Being short of a few men, as Commodore Dewey had said, he gladly accepted Larry and Striker, and added their names to the muster-roll, to serve until discharged or until the end of the trip. This finished, the pair were turned over to the officer of the deck, who in his turn passed them to the chief of the gunners.

"Well, you're a full-fledged son o' Uncle Sam now, Larry," remarked Striker, after the pair had been assigned to their positions at one of the side guns, and been put through a strict drill lasting over an hour. "How do you feel?"

"I feel a good deal like the cat that strayed in a strange garret," laughed the boy, just a bit nerv-

ously, for the sight of such big guns, and so much powder and shell awed him. "Not much woodwork around here."

"Woodwork wouldn't do, if it came to a real battle," answered the Yankee, "for a good shot would fill every man around with splinters. When we clear the ship for action, you'll see 'most everything that's made of wood and movable heaved overboard. Even the men's ditty boxes will have to go, and then they'll be no richer than we are," he added; the ditty boxes being, let me add, the chests in which the tars keep their odds-and-ends of belongings.

Larry was tired, but scarcely hungry again when the call sounded for supper. Yet he and Striker joined the gunners' mess, to which they received a warm welcome, for Uncle Sam's Jack Tars are at all times a "hail-and-well-met" sort of men.

Even "mess gear," as it is termed, was a good deal of a revelation to Larry, so different was it from the eating hour on a merchantman. He learned that all the meals from that of the commodore down were cooked in the one big galley, presided over by a dozen or more cooks, but that separate messes were numerous, the commodore and the captain being entitled by rule to dine alone, and the senior

and junior officers also dining separately, in the ward-room. Of the others on the warship, the boatswain, gunners, carpenters, and sail-makers had an apartment to themselves, and so had the marines and the firemen and engineers.

The queerest part of the proceedings, to the boy, was the fact that the jackies furnished most of their own eatables and chose their own cook, sometimes one of their own number. Uncle Sam allowed them the sum of thirty cents per day for food, and this amount had been put to the best possible use through money advanced before leaving port. In the American navy even an admiral pays for his own meals, although, to be sure, his salary is such that he can well afford to do so.

Larry found his mess-room on the *Olympia* a long, narrow place, ventilated as freely as the construction of the warship allowed. The table had been swung to the ceiling, but was now let down, and a "striker," that is, a cook's helper, attached the benches. The boy was furnished with a porcelain plate and cup, and an iron fork, knife, and spoon. For supper that evening the bill of fare was coffee, bread and butter, stewed fruit, and a bit of fresh meat.

"It's a mistake to think the jackies don't live well," observed Striker, when they were finishing up and some of the men had already drawn their pipes, for the hour after the last meal of the day was "smoking lamp" time. "The lads know how to make their allowance go as far as anybody, and they make the cooks do the best possible with all victuals as comes aboard. To be sure, on a long trip we'll git salt hoss and pilot crackers putty often, but that can't be helped on any ship, as ye know."

The "smoking lamp" just mentioned is a peculiarity of the navy. On account of the explosives aboard it is strictly prohibited to carry matches. So to light their pipes during the time they are allowed to smoke the men have a covered lamp lit for them, the cover having a small hole in it through which pipes can be lit.

Usually, the time after supper belongs to the men, to do with as they please. Some read, if they are fortunate enough to have any literature with them, others play banjos and accordions, some dance jigs, and not a few gather in groups to talk and spin yarns. At half-past seven "hammocks" is sounded, and then the men can retire if they desire. If they wish to remain up, they can do so for two hours longer,

when "pipe down" echoes through the warship, all the lights excepting those which must be kept lit are turned off, and the official day comes to an end.

But this night was Thursday, and the *Olympia* was the flagship of the fleet, carrying the marine band of about twenty pieces. Thursday had always been concert night, and now, to put his men in good spirits, Commodore Dewey ordered the bandmaster to give them nothing but patriotic airs, and this Bandmaster Valifuoco did, starting with those songs which were particularly popular during the Civil War, and ending up with Yankee Doodle and the Star-Spangled Banner. As the latter song rolled out upon the balmy evening air, the men could not resist the temptation to join in with their lusty and deep voices, and the sound wafted across the sea to the other ships, until the sailors everywhere were singing as never before.

"That's the song of all songs," cried Larry, when it was all over. "I never heard anything so grand before. Why, that ought to make a brave man of the worst coward on board! Hurrah for Old Glory!"

Utterly worn out with all that had occurred, Larry and Striker sought the hammocks assigned to them immediately after the concert was over and slept "like logs," to use the lad's way of expressing it.

So tired was the boy that he did not even dream, nor hear the many noises around him, such as the pounding of the water against the warship's prow as she kept steadily on her course, or the rattle of the heavy chains as the *Olympia* rose and fell on the long swells.

On deck there was a busy time among the petty officers, for a signal-light and a search-light drill were in progress. The great search-light flashed hither and thither over the dark green waters and over the other ships of the squadron. A sharp lookout was kept for the possible appearance of the enemy, the men in the tops having their night glasses continually in use. But the Spanish fleet did not show itself, and for the time being all went well.

CHAPTER XXIII

GUN DRILLS AND LIFE ON A MAN-O'-WAR

TOOT, toot! Toot, toot! Toot, toot-a-root toot!

It was the loud blare of a bugle which aroused Larry at exactly five o'clock on the following morning. For the moment on awakening he opened his eyes and stared around him. Where was he? Surely not on the deserted island, nor even in the dingy fore-castle of the *Columbia*.

"Lively, lad!" shouted Striker, leaping from his hammock. "Lively, I say, or you'll hear from the master-at-arms! You've got jest six minutes in which to dress yourself, roll up your hammock, and stow it away in the netting."

"All right, Luke, I'm with you!" answered the youth, now wide awake. With a turn he was out on the floor. "Dressing won't take me long, with nothing but a shirt and a pair of trousers to take care of. My, but I feel quite like myself again, don't you?"

"Aye, aye, Larry; the sleep did us both a power

of good, I guess. Watch me put my hammock up, and you'll have the trick in a jiffy. Now, then, there you are. Now roll up your trousers, for washing down decks on a man-o'-war is no play-work."

The officer of the deck was on hand, himself in bare feet like the men, and now the word was passed to the boatswain's mate that all was ready. The word travelled to the engineer below, and presently the pumps began to work, sending heavy streams of sea-water through the various stretches of hose lying about, and then commenced the daily task of washing down.

Had it not been for Striker, Larry would have been bewildered, but the tall Yankee knew exactly where to take hold, and made Larry go with him. "Everything is divided up," said Striker. "We'll have to attend to our corner of the ship and nothing else. It's jest like you had an apartment in one of them big flat houses ashore. Don't bother your neighbor, an' don't let him bother you, and you'll get along fust-rate."

The washing-down process lasted an hour, and by that time the *Olympia* was as clean as a whistle from stem to stern. After this, half an hour was allowed in which to prepare for breakfast.

"You can spruce up now, or after you have had your grub," said Striker. "I'd rather spruce up afterwards, for you might have an accident at the table if the *Olympia* should happen to give an extra heavy roll, and you want to keep that new suit mighty clean, or the division officer will be after you, especially on a ship that is carryin' Commodore Dewey. You can go it a bit slack on some other craft, but it won't do on a flagship — which is the model for all."

It was nearly nine o'clock when quarters sounded throughout the big ship. Again Larry looked at Striker inquiringly.

"Roll call, my lad — what I told you to spruce up for. Come ahead," and with this reply Striker led the way to the main deck, where sailors, gunners, marines, and others were arranging themselves in long lines, to answer to their names, and to pass inspection by their captain, while Commodore Dewey stood on the bridge above, looking on.

After quarters had reached an end, and while Larry was wondering what would come next, it was announced that a gun drill would be had, and for nearly two hours they were kept at it below decks, working the monster to which they had been

attached, going through the motions of loading, sighting, and firing. Larry went through all these movements with the rest; for although it was not likely that he would be called on to sight the piece, a delicate operation, or to fire it, yet it was deemed necessary that he should know something of how these things were done, in case those on the gun who were his superiors should be killed or disabled.

"Gracious, but it's hot work!" exclaimed Larry, when the arduous drill had come to an end. "It seems to me the gunners get the worst of it."

"We don't get any more of a dose than do the other men, lad," returned Striker. "Away down under us, where it's hotter twice over nor here, the engineers are a-workin' over their boilers to keep up steam, and the firemen and coal-heavers are workin' harder than ever you dreamed on, shovellin' coal and rakin' down the fires, and if you'll take a peep on deck you'll find the marines hard at it, with their monkey drill, or sword exercise, or something like that. It's one of the rules aboard a warship to keep Jack a-going, and the rule gets broken precious seldom."

"But how can they keep us going all the time, if there is no fight on?" persisted Larry.

"You're green, lad, even if ye have sailed in a

merchantman and know all the ropes from the fore-royal-stay to the topping-lift," answered the down-east sailor, with a good-natured laugh, for with the deck of a warship once more beneath him he was in his element. "There are drills enough alone to keep a man hustling from sunrise to sunset, as you'll find out if you remain on the *Olympia* long enough. First comes the drills on the guns, big and little — one of which we have just had. Then comes the sinking ship drill, with closing up the water-tight compartments, and afterwards provisioning the small boats and leaving the ship in a big haste but in perfect order. Another drill is the fire drill, with the hose and the hooked poles and sech; and another the 'repel boarders,' though they don't have boarders to repel like they use to; and another is the target practice with pistols and rifles; and then there is hospital work, and learning how to tie knots as they are tied in the navy, and a lot more which I can't remember just now, but which will drift along some day or another when you least expect it."

"Well, it's certainly a wonderful life, — a good deal different from what I expected, Luke. The *Olympia* doesn't seem like a ship to me; she is more of a floating fort."

“And that is what all naval vessels are now, lad — floating forts, or fighting machines, as some call ’em. They don’t float because they have the wood to keep ’em up, but because their metal sides keep out jest so much water. Make a good hole in a warship’s side, and she’ll drop to Davy Jones’ locker as quick as a lump o’ lead — that is, unless some of the water-tight compartments that are closed keep her afloat.”

Striker was right; there was plenty to do, even with no enemy in sight, and as the fleet swept on straight for the island of Luzon, Larry found the time passing swiftly. He was one, as we know, to make friends quickly, and soon he was on the best of terms with half a dozen members of the gun crews.

“You’ll get into it, my boy, and make a good one,” said Barrow, the head gunner of the piece to which he and Striker had been assigned. “I can see it by the cut of your jib. You’re no land-lubber, even if you are a bit green around here.” And he willingly gave both Striker and Larry “points” about the gun, which was as new to the down-east tar as it was to the boy, for guns are being improved constantly, and the present piece was of a different pattern from that which Striker had helped to man-age on the *Pensacola*.

By the talk of several petty officers Larry learned that it was expected they would sight the western coast of Luzon inside of the next twenty-four hours, and one of the officers added, that, if the Spanish fleet was where it was supposed to be, there would be hot fighting before the week was out.

"I imagine it will be rather hot fighting," said the boy to Striker. "Phew! the thermometer must be over a hundred in the shade, already!"

"We've struck a calm, and that is what makes it so uncomfortable," answered the down-easter. "We're sure to have smooth weather after sech a lot o' hurricanes as we had afore we were picked up."

It was indeed hot, and during the middle of the day the men were permitted to take it rather more easily than usual. After the drill at the guns Larry took the chance to bathe and felt much better for it.

The remainder of the day passed without special incident, although it was easy to observe as the warship drew closer to the land under the flag of the enemy that the officers and some of the men were under a strong mental tension. Heretofore the vessels had been sailing somewhat far apart, but as night came on they bunched up, and a closer watch than ever was kept.

“You see,” explained Striker, when he and Larry were discussing the closing up of the squadron, “we haven’t but one small boat—the *Petrel*—to do the scouting for us, and it may be the Spaniards are on the watch for us, and if they catch sight of us, they may send out a torpedo boat after dark to blow one of our vessels sky-high. A torpedo boat is a pesky little thing that is hard to spot in the dark and still harder to get out of the way of. The only thing to do is to spot it in time and give it a few good, heavy shots.”

It was on Saturday morning that land was sighted dead ahead—a long, low coast line, backed up by an indefinite series of hills. At once the fleet was signalled to halt, and each vessel began the preparations for that battle which every man felt was bound to come sooner or later.

To a landsman the preparations would have looked very much like the frantic efforts of a lot of crazy men. Everything in the way of a possible detriment during a battle was pitched overboard. The articles thus disposed of consisted of mess tables and benches, wooden partitions and rails, heavy chests and ditty boxes, and a hundred and one other things of value—all went sailing upon the rolling waters of the China Sea.

"It's like cleaning out a house on fire," remarked Larry. "By the time the sailors get done throwing their things away I reckon we'll be as rich as any of them and no mistake."

"Well, they can't be too careful," answered Striker. "Splinters are awful things. I've heard tell that during the times they used to fight in nothing but wooden ships the men were worse wounded by flying bits of woodwork than they were by the shots themselves. If this stuff floats ashore, what a harvest them natives will reap!"

The woodwork disposed of, streng nettings of rope were stretched under the small boats on deck, also to keep possible splinters off, and then the deck was cleared of everything movable. The heavy chain cables were likewise coiled around the ammunition hoists, to give them additional protection, for a coiled chain cable will ward off a shot or shell just as well as will a moderately thick sheet of armor plate.

CHAPTER XXIV

"CLEAR SHIP FOR ACTION!"

"Do you know much about this island of Luzon?" asked Larry of Striker, after the two had been at the gun again, seeing that everything was oiled and in perfect order, and after Larry had taken an additional lesson in handling the stout canvas bags containing fifty and a hundred pounds of brown prismatic powder.

"Well, I know a little," answered the tall down-easter, as he took a long look ashore, for now the coast line loomed up quite plainly to his trained eye. "The island is by far the largest of the Philippines, and is one of the most northern. Away to the south of the group is Mindanao, and, as you know, there are any quantity of islands, big an' little, betwixt the two. I once heard say that Luzon was about the size of all of our down-east states combined."

"It's larger then than I thought it was," cried Larry, somewhat astonished. "And what about the cities?"

“The biggest city is Manila, on the east shore of Manila Bay, a big harbor shaped like a camel’s head, with the opening at the neck of the animal, and Manila sittin’ like a wart on the critter’s nose. Years an’ years ago the city was only a Spanish military post, but it grew an’ grew, until I reckon there are several hundred thousand folks — Chinese and Japanese and all — in and around Manila. A good many of the people are what they call Tagals, a branch of the Malay race — a good enough set if the Spanish would only treat ’em half decently.”

“Something was said about their being in rebellion,” went on the boy. “I wonder if they are fighting now.”

“To be sure they are fighting,” put in Barrow, the gunner. “I heard the lieutenant say, and I guess he got it straight from headquarters, that there are between thirty and forty thousand Tagals and others in revolt, under General Emilio Aguinaldo and other leaders. Oh, they’ll make it as hot on land in these quarters as we’ll make it on the sea, if we can catch sight of those will-o-the-wisp Dons.”

There had been a vigorous signalling going on between the vessels of the squadron, and now all but the *Concord* and the *Boston* slowed up. The two

craft mentioned put on extra steam, and in a short while were lost to sight in the distance.

"They are out on a scout," announced Striker. "Nothing like being careful, you know. There's a bay ahead, and they are no doubt under orders to search it."

Striker's surmise was correct. The opening ahead was that of Subic Bay, a number of miles west of the bay of Manila. The *Boston* and *Concord* were to examine every corner and shelter of it carefully, and hurry back at the first sign of the enemy. Later on the *Baltimore* joined her two sister ships.

"If the Spanish fleet is in Subic Bay, we'll have some fun getting at them," Larry heard one of the sailors say. "The water there is mighty shallow in spots, and rocks are there a-plenty."

"Yes, and it's likely if the Dons are there they'll plant some shore batteries, and give us the hottest kind of a plunging fire," added another. "Splice the anchor chain, but I hate a plunging fire," was added with a growl. All sailors hate such a fire, coming from an elevated battery capable of throwing shot and shell directly down upon a vessel's deck.

The hours passed slowly, until, towards evening,

the three warships sent out on the scout were seen coming back "empty handed," as Striker expressed it. No vessels but a few fishing and merchant craft had been seen.

The warships were now called closer together, and the various commanders were summoned by Commodore Dewey to the flagship, to hold a council of war. The coming of so many small boats to the *Olympia* was an event of interest to Larry, and he viewed each captain with combined curiosity and respect. The council of war was held in the after-cabin of the flagship, and, of course, the sailors heard nothing of what was going on. But we will take a peep behind the curtain.

Having satisfied himself that Admiral Montojo's ships were not in Subic Bay, Commodore Dewey was strongly of the impression that the Spanish officer had taken his fleet into Manila Bay. There were a number of reasons for this, the principal one of which was that it seemed likely that the admiral would think it his duty to remain close to Manila, to protect it both from American attack and from the fiercer and fiercer attacks of the insurgents.

The whole question was, then, Should the American warships risk a run into Manila Bay? That

was a question to be carefully considered, and why my young readers will soon learn.

As Striker had mentioned, the bay was shaped somewhat like the head of a camel, with the neck of the animal forming the entrance to the waters. Manila was situated twenty-nine miles from this entrance, and eight miles out from the city was a long, low neck of land, at the extremity of which stood Fort Cavite, an old but massive stronghold, mounting sufficient pieces to cover the shipping in front of Manila proper.

Almost in the centre of the entrance to Manila Bay lay Corregidor Island, with a smaller island beside it. Corregidor Island was also fortified, with guns well able to sweep the channels on both sides. More than this, it was reported that the entrance to the bay was strongly mined by what are known as contact mines; that is, mines which will explode the moment a ship comes into contact with them. What a marine mine can do has already been only too well illustrated in the case of the ill-fated *Maine*.

The question then was, Should the squadron risk an attempt to slip into the bay, past Corregidor Island, and past the hidden mines? It took brave men to decide to do this, but the commodore and his

captains voted to a man that this should be done, and furthermore, that the attempt should be made that very night.

In less than half an hour after the council of war broke up, what was proposed to be done under cover of darkness was known to every one on the warships. Perhaps some of the jackies turned pale at the news, but if so they were lost among the numbers of those who gave their commodore and their captains “three times three” with a will. Your true American man-o’-war’s man would rather fight than cruise around, any day.

In order not to appear off the entrance to Manila Bay while it was yet light, the squadron steamed slowly southeastward, keeping a good distance from shore. The extreme heat almost made eating out of the question, yet supper was served at the usual time,—the last meal to be had for some hours to come.

The sun went down as in a veritable sea of molten lead, and as the night drew on, the pale southern moon came up, accompanied by hundreds of twinkling stars. Perhaps those in command would have preferred greater darkness, yet

it was necessary to have some light, that the channel might be seen without the aid of search or other lights.

As it grew darker each warship put out a single hooded light, showing from behind only; this precaution being taken to keep one vessel from running up into that before her. All the other exposed lights were cut off, and officers and men were alike warned that no noise that was not absolutely necessary should be made. If it was possible, Commodore Dewey intended to run by the batteries on Corregidor Island, and any other batteries in the vicinity, without being discovered. In naval warfare, and in military warfare, too, for the matter of that, to come upon the enemy when he least expects it, and thus throw him into more or less confusion, often constitutes a large element of success.

On and on went the squadron, looking like dim phantoms of the night, moving in an irregular line, the *Olympia* in the lead, and the tiny *Petrel* and despatch boat *McCulloch* bringing up together in the rear. Corregidor Island was not yet visible, yet the men knew it might appear in the dim distance at any moment.

“Clear ship for action!”

The command was given quietly, and instead of blowing their bugles and whistles, and ringing their bells, the under-officers passed the commands along by word of mouth. Silently the men obeyed, but what a rushing around ensued! To an outsider the men might have appeared in helpless confusion, yet nothing could have been more orderly.

As mentioned before, all unnecessary woodwork had already been disposed of, but now the decks were cleared of even the ventilator pipes wherever they interfered with the range of the big guns, and chains were run out, to help work guns from the outside as well as from the inside. Added to this, a gangway that had been kept until the last minute was slid into the sea, and then the various hatchways were fitted with steel covers, to protect those below from the explosion of a stray shell or the plunging fire of small arms.

In the bowels of the warships the engineers and others had also been busy, coupling the various engines so that they might work one for another, attaching the power to the machinery that worked the big guns and to the electric circuit, for my

young readers must remember that many modern guns are fired by electricity. The pumping-engines were also connected with the fire-hose, which was laid in every part of the ship, and final tests were made of the appliances designed to flood with water any magazine that was in danger of explosion.

Firemen and stokers were at the fires, bringing the heat up to the highest possible point, and putting tons and tons of coal where it would be handiest, and also testing the forced draughts and blowers. They knew only too well that while in action a modern battleship must keep moving lively, or the enemy will blow her up as soon as guns can be properly pointed. And they knew, too, that if the battle went the wrong way, it would be steam alone that might save them from capture.

And while this was going on, Larry, Striker, and those working with them had not been idle. The magazines had been opened and the work of delivering powder and projectiles to the various guns started. Ammunition, too, had been sent to the men in the fighting tops. Each gun was carefully swabbed out and loaded, and the range-finders tested by the head gunners. The actual loading

of the big gun to which he had been assigned filled Larry with interest. He wondered how it would sound when the charge went off, and if they would hit anything on the first trial.

In the conning tower, a round, steel structure, stood Captain Gridley, ready to do or die, as the occasion might require. The captain was not well, but had begged to be allowed to take charge of his vessel upon this trip, confident that he should come out of any contest with colors flying. Close behind the captain was the man at the wheel, and half a dozen others, on duty at the speaking-tubes and ready to carry commands to any portion of the warship.

The commodore was on the bridge, that curious structure set sidewise above the deck of every modern battleship. With him, too, were petty officers, to carry his commands or send them to the other vessels by the use of night signals. And all was as silent as death, even the big engines doing their work with nothing more than an indefinite rumble, and the big fires blazing away without a spark soaring skyward.

A bit of land came out of the distance. Slowly but surely the *Olympia* crept closer to it, keeping

it upon the port side. It was Corregidor Island. Soon appeared the small island of Pulo Caballo. They were approaching the entrance to the harbor at last. Would they be able to pass into the waters beyond in safety?

CHAPTER XXV

THE SPANISH FLEET IS DISCOVERED OFF FORT CAVITE

"WE'RE off the island!" whispered Striker to Larry, as both peered through the opening beside their gun.

"It's as dark on the island as it is on the ships," returned the boy. His heart was thumping so violently that he could scarcely speak.

"Silence, men!" came the low command from out of the semi-darkness of the gun-deck. And then, for the time being, nothing more was said.

On swept the flagship at a speed of eight knots an hour. Corregidor Island was now directly abeam, and every glass on the big warship was trained on those dark and frowning works, while a sharp lookout was kept ahead and the "mine catchers" were out in force. In a minute more the *Olympia* would sweep into Boca Grande, the main channel, supposed to be fairly thick with hidden mines. What if their ship should strike? The thought sent a cold shiver

down Larry's back. All in an instant he thought of his former home, of his two brothers, perhaps already in Uncle Sam's service, of the *Columbia*, of Olan Oleson, and a score of other persons and things. He had turned away from the opening, but now, as Striker caught his arm, he turned back once more.

The *Olympia* had passed the fort on the island, and still no alarm had sounded forth. Next came the *Baltimore*, and still the silence remained unbroken. The men on both warships almost felt like giving a cheer.

Suddenly all was changed. Sizz! a colored rocket went sailing up into the darkness of the night, fired from Corregidor Island. Immediately an answering rocket came from the distant shore. The American ships had been discovered!

"The game is up!" cried Striker, and the hum of a dozen voices broke the stillness as the men began again to talk in whispers. "There, they have opened the ball! Now may the best men win, an' thet means us Yankees, every trip!"

While Striker was speaking, a dull boom had sounded over the night waters, and now an eight-inch shell whistled over the deck of the *Raleigh*, the third ship in the line. The shell had scarcely struck

the sea beyond when it exploded with a loud noise, scattering the spray in all directions.

"I wonder if we have got to take this in silence," muttered Barrow, when a boom from the *Raleigh* told that she had answered the enemy's fire. Soon came a shot from the *Boston*, as that ship passed close to the fort. In the mean time the other vessels were out of range. Not to be outdone by her companions, the *Concord* sent a six-inch shell into a shore battery that began firing. At that time the damage done was not known, but later on it was ascertained that the shell had landed directly in the battery, and one Spanish soldier was killed and several gunners injured; and thus was the first blood of the war spilt in this part of the world.

But the Americans had suffered a loss too, although not through the illy aimed shots of their enemy. Signalled to run alongside of the big *Olympia* for protection, the *McCulloch* reported the death of her chief engineer, a highly esteemed man named Randall, who had been overcome by the terrific heat in the despatch boat's engine-room. This was the first, and, in fact, the only life lost by our side during the world-famous battle now so close at hand.

"We're out of that," said the chief of the gunners,

when Corregidor Island had been left in the distance. "And I don't believe they even touched us."

"We're not over the mines yet," said Barrow. "I take it we've got good cause to remember the *Maine* just now. If we strike anything like that —"

"Don't go for to speak of it!" cried Striker. "It's bad enough to have your nerves up like the string o' a bow, without spittin' out your tongue about it." And several nodded so vigorously at this that the word "mine" was not mentioned again. The lazy ones stretched themselves beside their "big brothers," as they called their guns, but the majority were in no humor to do aught but peer through the portholes, trying vainly to pierce the darkness of the night as the moon scurried beneath some fleeting clouds.

"Four hundred pairs of eyes on the watch and nothing to see but water and sky," mused Striker. "I hope we don't feel anything more either," he added, and that was the last reference the down-easter made to the mines.

However, by one o'clock in the morning the bugbear was a thing of the past, for all the warships were standing out into the middle of Manila Bay, where it was not likely a mine would be encountered. That they had actually passed through a field of mines,

though, is a matter of history, and this being so, their complete escape from injury seems little short of a miracle. Some naval experts have said that running the mines was as much to the Americans' credit as what came after.

There now remained nothing to do but to wait for daylight, since Commodore Dewey did not deem it advisable to go in shore in the darkness. The vessels consequently sailed on slowly towards the outer anchorage off Manila. A great many more men turned in to snatch a nap previous to engaging in a battle that was likely to be not far off. From what they had seen off Corregidor Island, those in command felt almost certain that Admiral Montojo's fleet must be in the vicinity.

"It will either be a case of meeting that fleet or bombarding Manila, see if it ain't," remarked Striker, as he and Larry turned in near the gun. Getting into one's hammock under the circumstances was out of the question.

At four o'clock, just as the first streaks of dawn were beginning to show over the distant mountains of Luzon, there was a call for something with which to arouse the men, and strong coffee was served, to which were added hardtack for any one who cared for

them. As Larry sipped his steaming coffee and munched a soaked-up hardtack, he looked occasionally through the port and over the distant waters, and beheld what looked like a mass of shipping backed up by a solidly built-up town. This was Manila itself.

"It looks exactly as it did when I was here years ago," remarked Striker. "That part over to the right is old Manila, where the military post used to be. The main shipping is dead ahead of us, in the new territory. There is a river running between the two portions."

"I don't see anything like a warship," said Larry, "though, to be sure, it's too dark yet to see much."

"They'll see all they want to see when the sun is a bit higher, lad, and they get out their best glasses. But I don't think the Spaniards would put their battleships in the midst o' that shipping — it wouldn't be fair, if they were expecting us."

The squadron now began to move along the front of Manila harbor, with glasses trained on the shipping, from which, as the sun came up, could be seen floating the flags of various nations. Some of the flags were Spanish, but these were on merchantmen and fishing craft.

"We haven't caught the Spanish admiral yet," sighed the tall down-easter, as word drifted below that Manila harbor did not hold the fleet they were after. I wonder what the commodore will do now?"

No one on the *Olympia* was kept long in suspense over this point. The squadron was moving southward, in the direction of the long neck of land upon which was located, as previously mentioned, Fort Cavite, or, as it is locally termed, the Cavite Arsenal.

"They have found the Spanish fleet!" The cry ran from one ship to another, and soon it was on the lips of everybody, from the men in the tops to the stokers in the depths of the coal bunkers. The warships of the enemy had been discovered lying in the little bay formed by the curving shore of old Manila and the neck of land supporting Fort Cavite. The distance from Fort Cavite to Manila is almost eight miles in a straight line. Along such an imaginary line, and back of it, was Admiral Montojo's fleet, flanked on the right by Manila's shore batteries, and on the left by the powerful guns of the fort.

The Spanish fleet was a formidable one. If their

individual ships were not the equal of the American vessels, they had more of them, and they had, moreover, the assistance of the shore batteries and the powerful fort. A glance at their vessels will not come amiss to the reader who wishes to know some of the particulars of this stirring encounter.

The real flagship of the Spanish fleet was the cruiser *Reina Cristina*, of 3100 tons, carrying twenty guns of small and large caliber, including six rapid-firing guns supposed to be of first-class pattern and efficacy. Like the *Olympia*, she carried about four hundred officers and men.

Next in size to the flagship came the cruiser *Castilla*, the temporary flagship, of 3300 tons, carrying a mixed battery of eighteen guns, and manned by three hundred well-trained Spanish tars. Two other cruisers were the *Don Antonio de Ulloa* and the *Don Juan de Austria*, of about 1100 tons burden each, and each carrying nine guns and manned by a crew of one hundred and seventy-three. There was another cruiser at hand, the *Velasco*, but she was out of repair, and her best guns had been placed near the fort, for use from shore.

Of the gunboats, of which there were quite a number, the principal ones were the *Isla de Luzon*

and the *Isla de Cuba*, each of a thousand tons, carrying a mixed battery of ten guns, and manned by a hundred and sixty officers and men. There were also the *General Lezo*, mounting half a dozen guns, the *Del Duero*, and also the Spanish mail steamer, *Mindanao*, which had been hastily pressed into service as an auxiliary cruiser, with a battery of no mean proportions. Added to these vessels were four torpedo boats and the transport *Manila*. The total number of officers and men on the various vessels was estimated to be between eighteen and nineteen hundred — about a hundred more than in the American forces.

A word may be added concerning Admiral Patricio Montojo y Pasaron. He was not only the commander of the fleet, but also the commander at Cavite. He was an old and trained naval officer, known to be brave to the degree of rashness, and even by Americans it was felt that he was a foe fully worthy of Commodore Dewey's steel. The men beneath the Spanish admiral were as bold and hard fighters as himself. All in all, the coming contest was to be a battle of giants, and what the outcome of that mighty contest was to be no person at the outset could tell.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BATTLE OF MANILA BAY

BOOM! bang! crack! boom! boom! boom!

Loud and clear came the reports over the waters of the inner bay, and over and around the American warships whistled and screamed a dozen balls and shells ere they plunged into the briny element. The shore battery near old Manila had "opened the ball," as Striker declared, and, though not a shot took effect, the firing thoroughly aroused Uncle Sam's jackies to the fact that "the real thing" was on them.

"Now, boys, roll up your sleeves and be prepared to pitch in!" exclaimed Barrow. "It's no loafing allowed for the next few hours, I'll warrant you! Larry, you must do the double-quick now if you never did it before."

"I'm more than willing to pitch in," answered the youth, with a nervous little laugh. "Anything is better than this waiting around."

"That's true," put in Striker. "I know I won't get my nerves settled until we're in the thick on it—kind o' like your second wind in a fist fight, you know."

The men were crowded together at the ports, watching eagerly whatever might be seen, which just then was not much, for they were getting away from the shore batteries, and the first of the battle-ships of the enemy was still some distance off. Barrow's reference to shirt sleeves was entirely superfluous, since the shirts worn were altogether of the short-sleeved variety, revealing full many a tough and brawny arm, ready to do battle as long as the breath of life remained in its owner's body.

"We're getting closer to 'em," said Striker, a few minutes later. "If only the commodore —"

The tall Yankee did not finish, but stared before him in open-mouthed amazement. About a thousand yards away the waters of the bay had suddenly gone up into a gigantic fountain. A rumble followed, felt quite distinctly by all on board.

"Gracious, what's that, an earthquake?" ejaculated Larry.

"Sort of one, lad," answered Barrow. "That

was a connection mine going up. 'They've got 'em out here, it would seem, but they made a bad miss of it that trip — about half a mile, I calculate. It's lucky we weren't sailing closer in, eh? "

"I should say so." Larry drew a long breath. "I think I'd rather fight with the guns, any day."

"So would all of us, lad; but we have to take what comes, and so does the enemy. We've got a whole lot of warships against us, but the *Olympia's* all right, and so are the others, and we'll knock the spots off those Spaniards. Hurrah for Uncle Sam and remember the *Maine!*" he added loudly.

"Remember the *Maine!*" came back from a hundred voices, in heavy unison. That was the battle-cry, uttered thousands of times during those trying hours, just as during the Mexican War the cry was, "Remember the Alamo!" and during the Revolutionary War, "Remember Concord and Lexington!" Soldiers and sailors must have some cry to stir up their blood, and what cry was better for that purpose than one calling upon them to remember the martyrdom of two hundred and fifty-three of their comrades in arms?

The signal was now displayed from the American flagship to close up and prepare for general action,

and the vessels fell into a single column, four hundred yards apart, and went ahead at a speed of six knots an hour. The *Olympia*, as usual, led, and from each masthead and gaff floated Old Glory, whipping out a breezy defiance to the enemy as the line swept on.

Commodore Dewey's plan of battle was exceedingly simple. Unless something unusual occurred, the ships were to make a number of courses in front of the enemy's line, the vessels taking part to be the six cruisers and gunboats. The despatch boat and the boats with coal and stores were to lie just out of range of the Spanish guns. The first course was to be at forty-five hundred yards, and each circuit was to come in a little closer, the tide of battle permitting. It was Dewey's plan, just as it was Nelson's plan at the famous battle of Trafalgar, to give the enemy no rest, but to go at him with all vigor from the start.

The commodore was on the bridge of the *Olympia* with his powerful field-glasses in his hand. When about five thousand yards away from the *Castilla*, which was seen to be flying the Spanish admiral's pennant for the time being, he turned to Captain Gridley, who stood watching him eagerly.

"You can open up as soon as you please, Gridley," he said. "And give it to them good and strong."

"I'll train the forward turret gun myself," Captain Gridley is reported to have answered, as he made off, to later on command his ship from the conning tower.

"Ready there!" the cry running along the larboard guns made everybody jump. "Prepare to fire."

"Don't hold your ears shut!" screamed Striker at Larry. "They are better off open, and throw your arms out like this, and open your mouth," he went through the motions himself. "Now, then!"

Larry had scarcely time to follow directions than the final signal was given, and with what seemed little short of a thunderclap to the youth, the *Olympia* let drive with her four eight-inch turret guns. The aim was directed at the *Castilla*, and when the smoke cleared away the Spanish flagship was seen to be struck in one, if not two, places.

"Come, lad, pick yourself up and hustle!" cried Barrow, for Larry had gone down with the unusual roll caused by the discharge. "Lively now, for there's no time to waste before the next shot."

The man at the breech, a good-natured chap named Castleton, was already opening the gun. As the breech fell back a cloud of smoke and soot entered the gun-room, nearly choking Larry. When the boy had cleared his eyes and throat he saw to his astonishment that all the highly polished brass-work on the cannon had turned a sickly green.

The soot cleared away, Striker began to swab out the gun, which contained a quantity of matter looking like red chalk. This was what was left of the burnt powder. Barrow felt of the piece, to find it cool enough to do without a washing with cold water, and then the process of reloading began.

During this time the other ships in the line began to fire at the enemy, and now the Spanish warships fired in return. The noise was something fearful, and in a short while every ship in the harbor was enveloped in a dense cloud of smoke.

As was natural, the opening fire on the American side was directed principally to the ship flying the Spanish admiral's colors, and by the time one course had been taken down the line, and the *Olympia* was sweeping closer to try it again, the *Castilla*, as well as the *Reina Cristina*, was seen to be struck in a dozen places, and on fire.

"It's first blood for us!" yelled Striker, enthusiastically. "I don't believe we've been struck once."

He had hardly spoken when the whining shriek of a hundred and fifty pound shell was heard, coming straight at the *Olympia*. "We're struck now!" cried Barrow, when, as shells sometimes do, the unwelcome missile took a turn in the air and went sailing through the flagship's upper works, doing damage that was but trifling.

In less than half an hour Larry felt at home at his work. He now knew what real fighting meant, and was getting used to the noise and smoke. Strange to say, he did not feel in the least alarmed. Perhaps this was because some awful shot had not yet brought home to him the true horrors of the dreadful combat. He was working like a Trojan, with the perspiration pouring from his whole body, and the smoke and soot had made him the color of a true African.

The *Olympia's* gunners had now obtained the correct range of the Spanish ships, and in addition to the smaller shots were pouring in a number of two hundred and fifty pound shells. As the flagship came down the second course, these shells

struck fairly and squarely upon the deck of the *Castilla*, doing fearful damage.

"She'll be out of it in a few minutes more!" cried Striker. "See, she is burning in two places. Her crew had better leave before the magazines blow up, if they want to save their lives."

"Their other ships are catching it, too," said Barrow, as a sudden breeze sent the smoke flying. "I wonder how the rest of our squadron are making it?"

That was a question which could not be answered just then, but, later on, word drifted into the gun-room that the *Baltimore* had been hit rather heavily and some of the men injured. The *Raleigh* had had her largest whaleboat smashed, and the splinters had caught some of the men on deck, but the injuries were trifling.

As the smoke went up, the *Castilla* was seen to be turning, as if to retire to a small inlet partly behind Fort Cavite. She was now in flames in every part. Quick orders were given, and just as the Spanish flagship showed her stern fully, a big shot from the *Olympia* went crashing straight through her. It is said this shot killed over fifty of her crew, and exploded one of her boilers.

However that was, it is a fact that she sank immediately afterwards, the majority of her crew going with her.

"The game is up with 'em!" cried Striker. "I reckon the Dons will give it up now!"

But the tall Yankee was mistaken, not knowing the stern fighting qualities of Admiral Montojo. Scarcely had the *Castilla* gone down when the admiral's flag was hoisted on the *Reina Cristina*, and the fire on board of that boat was put out.

"Their flag is up again!" said Barrow. "Now to give the new flagship the same dose that we gave the other! Come, Castleton, clean out the gun good."

Castleton, very much exhausted, staggered forward and did as bidden. The terrible heat was beginning to tell upon all sides. Larry brought some powder, and then turned to get a drink from the hose pipe, his mouth feeling as though it was filled with cotton. Striker had obtained permission to take a peep on deck, and the other men were working along as well as the smoke and exhaustion would permit.

How it all happened it was impossible, afterward, for Larry to tell. He had obtained all the powder

necessary and was getting his drink as before mentioned. A fall beside him made him turn, and through the smoke he saw Castleton lying beside him. The gunner's mate had been overcome by the heat.

"Poor chap!" thought the boy, and turned the hose upon the prostrate man's head, as the best available means of restoring him to consciousness.

Then, while still working over Castleton, Larry happened to glance towards the gun, which Barrow was on the point of firing. A sight met his gaze which nearly paralyzed him. The gun breech was closed but still unlocked! Should Barrow discharge the gun while in that condition, every one of them would be blown to atoms!

CHAPTER XXVII

ADDITIONAL INCIDENTS OF THE GREAT BATTLE

As he made his awful discovery, Larry dropped the hose pipe and fell back a few steps. To get out of danger is, instinctively, the first thought of every one, and in a vague way it flashed over his mind that he must flee or be annihilated.

Then another thought came, swift on the track of the first. If the gun was discharged with the breech unlocked, all his companions, and perhaps many others, would be killed, while there was no telling how much the *Olympia* would suffer.

All this passed through his mind with the rapidity of a lightning flash. As he thought, he tried to yell to Barrow, but the words would not come. His very jaws were set in horror, while his eyes bulged from their sockets. His hands went up, and he shook them appealingly at the head gunner.

But Barrow was looking another way, as was natural when the piece was to be discharged. Larry



felt it was all over. In that moment he virtually suffered the pang of being killed.

But now came a chance to stop the impending catastrophe. Prompted by curiosity, Barrow turned, to take another squint at the enemy before letting drive. But his hand still retained its hold on the connection used for firing purposes.

"Oh, God, help me!" was the thought which forced its way to Larry's lips, and he made one wild, agonizing leap to the head gunner's side. "Don't fire! don't fire!"

"What's that?" asked Barrow, coolly, as he turned. Then as he caught sight of the boy's set face and staring eyes, he added, "Why, lad, what ails you? Got a fit?"

"Don't fire! don't fire!" repeated Larry, and with rigid finger pointed to the unlocked breech.

It was now Barrow's turn to be struck dumb. He still held the connection, and threatened in his consternation to set off the gun anyway. But suddenly he realized the situation more fully, and dropped the connection as though it were a coal of fire.

"Where is Castleton?" he thundered. "Does he want to blow us all to kingdom come?"

For answer, Larry pointed to the prostrate man.

"He's knocked out by the heat," he answered, in a voice that did not sound in the least like his own.

"Humph! he ought to have given us some warning!" grumbled Barrow, doing what he could to steady his own tones. "Why, if the gun had gone off standing like that, the whole gun-room would have been knocked out of sight, to say nothing of the rest of the ship."

He began to lock up the breech, and Larry turned again to poor Castleton. The fellow soon regained his consciousness, but could not continue his work, and was sent to the hospital quarters, while an extra man from another gun came to take his place.

"I must give you credit for what you did, Larry," said Barrow, when the excitement was over. "Many a boy, and man, too, for that matter, would have thought of nothing but getting away. You saved us all, and I, for one, sha'n't forget it," and he cracked the youth good-naturedly upon the shoulder.

Striker now came back, but the work was getting so vigorous that he was not told of the incident until some time after. From the bridge, the commodore had discovered a torpedo boat sneaking out from below the fort, with the evident intention of making a circuit and coming up back of the American ships.

Captain Gridley was ordered to train the guns of the *Olympia* upon this craft, and the gunners went at it with a will, each vying with the others in making the best shot. The gun our friends were at hit the torpedo boat on the stern, disabling her steering gear, and two other shots sent her scurrying for land. When close to shore a final shot fairly lifted her out of the water and cast her on the sands, a total wreck.

By the time the *Olympia* was coming along on her third course before the line of the enemy, it was found that the new flagship, the *Reina Cristina*, was again in flames, while the other ships were suffering more or less in the same way. The new flagship fought desperately, and two shots whizzed through the *Olympia's* upper rigging again, while a third fairly clipped the American flagship's stern. But the *Reina Cristina* could not hold out, and retired in a thick cloud of smoke, burning fiercely.

In the mean time, however, the *Don Antonio de Ulloa* came to the front with a heavy fire, directed principally at the *Olympia* and the *Baltimore*. Her captain, E. Robino, was known to be one of the greatest fighters in the Spanish navy, and he kept his guns at it so long as it was possible for him to do so.

"He is hot as pepper," said Striker, as they drew

closer to the *Ulloa*. "But we'll down him, see if we don't." And Striker was right, for it was not long after this that the *Ulloa* went down, many of her men with her, but with her colors nailed to her mast. It was now seen that nearly all the other ships were burning. A few more shots from the *Olympia* were delivered, and the flagship drew off, signalling the others to follow. To go close in shore after the enemy was an impossibility for the large members of the squadron, the water being too shallow.

The terrific heat of the day, and the forced fighting, had almost exhausted every man on the ships, and seeing the fight was his own, Commodore Dewey wisely decided to give his men a breathing spell and something to eat. Accordingly, as soon as they were out of range, orders came to quit the guns and get breakfast. The battle had now raged for about three hours.

"We've got 'em on the run!" shouted Striker, enthusiastically. "I hope the commodore sends us back to finish 'em up."

"He'll do that all right enough," replied a brawny marine standing by. "You never saw Commodore Dewey doing things by halves."

"Three cheers for our commodore!" suddenly

shouted somebody, and the cheers were given with a will.

"Three cheers for Captain Gridley and our other officers!" was added.

"What's the matter with three cheers for the *Olympia* and the other ships of this squadron?" asked Larry, half laughing, and up went the cheers as loudly as the rest. No one on board had been injured, the enemy was all but defeated, and it was a joyous if a tired time all around.

"We've got five shots in the upper works, that's all," was the report which went around. "The only man injured is Casey. Hautermann stepped on his toe-corn, and they had a set-to." And a roar went up; for Casey was known as a pugnacious Irishman, and Hautermann as an equally belligerent German, and the two were continually at swords' points.

Breakfast and a well-earned rest put every man again on his feet, and Castleton came back to his gun. "I remember the breech," he said. "I was just starting to lock it when I went down as if a weight had hit me on the head. I couldn't have helped it if I was to hang for it."

"I believe you," growled Barrow. "But after this I reckon I'll take a squint at the breech myself before I touch her off."

During the time that the men were having breakfast a council of war was held by the commodore and his captains, and it was decided to run in as close as possible to Fort Cavite and silence it, as well as to go at what was left of the Spanish fleet. The order to return to battle sounded at a little before eleven, and this time the *Baltimore* was allowed to lead, the *Olympia* and others following.

Again the storm of shot and shell broke forth, fiercely upon the American side, and but feebly upon the part of their enemy. All the big ships of the Spaniards were now either burnt or sunk, and the little craft were fast getting into the same condition.

"The *Raleigh*, *Concord*, and *Petrel* will go inside and destroy shipping," was the next order signalled from the flagship, and those warships hastened to obey. But the *Raleigh* drew too much water, and after getting aground twice was forced to give up the task assigned to her. The *Concord* and *Petrel*, however, crossed the shoals in safety, and began a fierce bombardment from the rear, while the big ships shelled the Arsenal from the front. In the mean time, the batteries near Manila had been silenced by Commodore Dewey, who sent word that the city's guns must cease firing or he would shell the town.

The tide of battle had swept along into the afternoon when suddenly a loud hurraing was heard, coming from where the *Concord* and *Petrel* lay. A minute later, as the smoke lifted, a flag of truce could be seen flying from the Arsenal. Then the *Petrel* signalled: —

“The enemy has surrendered!”

What a storm of cheers went up. It was as if pandemonium had suddenly broken loose upon all sides. Officers joined the men in shouting, and the deck and rigging swarmed with jackies waving their caps and handkerchiefs. Larry shouted as loudly as the rest, and it must be acknowledged that the plucky boy thought it the proudest moment of his life.

It was a victory without a parallel in history. Six American fighting ships had attacked eight large Spanish vessels, besides a number of small craft, a shore battery, and a fairly-well equipped fort. The Spanish had had all their ships either sunk, blown up, or burnt, the battery had been shattered to pieces and the fort silenced. The Spanish had lost in killed and wounded over five hundred men, and those that were able, were fleeing to Manila by the inland roads, and with them Admiral Montojo, who was slightly wounded.

And the loss to the Americans? Strange, nay, astonishing as it may appear, there was none worth mentioning, if we except the death of the engineer overcome by the heat. On the *Baltimore* six men had been wounded by the bursting of a shell, but the surgeons said all would speedily recover. The *Olympia* had received five shots in her upper works, of no consequence, as viewed from the standpoint of war, and the *Raleigh's* whaleboat would need the services of the ship's carpenter. Three shots in her upper works was the damage on the *Baltimore*, and the *Boston*, *Concord*, and *Petrel* had escaped with practically no injury at all.

Small wonder, then, that the officers and men of the squadron were the happiest set on the face of the earth, and small wonder that they thought their gallant commodore the greatest naval hero living. As for Commodore Dewey, he was equally happy. That day's work had placed his name high up on the brightest page in American history.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ON TO HONG KONG — CONCLUSION

“I FEEL like a fellow who has been rolling in a coal hole,” remarked Larry, when the excitement had somewhat subsided. “And my ears are in a regular buzz.”

“That buzzing will go away by morning,” said Striker. “Ah, lad, but it was a great victory, wasn’t it now?” and he slapped Larry heartily on the back. When the news of the surrender came in, Striker had insisted upon dancing an impromptu jig, and several had joined in. There was likely to be a “high time” on the *Olympia* for some days to come, now that the terrible strain under which the men had been laboring had been removed.

For it is no easy thing to face death, even at something of a distance. Everybody knew that only the wretched aiming of the Spanish gunners had saved them from shots of a more or less seri-

ous nature. Had those five balls which had struck in the upper works been aimed lower, there would, without question, have been great havoc.

It was drawing towards Sunday evening, and the *Olympia* had taken up a position outside of Manila, leaving several of the other vessels to guard around Fort Cavite. At this place, the Spaniards were engaged in carrying off their dead and wounded and were not molested. Commodore Dewey might have taken a large number of prisoners, had he forced a fight on land, but he had no accommodations for such a purpose. He had been sent out to find the Spanish fleet and "engage" it, and he had engaged it most effectually. He must now await additional orders from Washington.

It was some little time before Larry himself felt like quieting down, but a good washing up and changing of garments made him feel more like himself.

"This isn't much of a Sunday," he observed to Barrow, when they were eating supper. "The chaplain hasn't had a chance to say a word."

Nevertheless, the chaplain did hold a brief "church," although the sailors prepared no "rig" for it. This was during the smoking hour, and

men attended or not, just as they pleased. Larry felt it his duty to go, and took Striker with him.

Utterly worn out, the boy slept soundly that night, although once or twice some ugly dreams chased each other across his mind—cannon shots aimed directly for his head and that unlocked breech, which he never would forget.

The following day was a busy one for the separate vessels of the Asiatic Squadron. While the *Concord* and *Petrel* received the surrender of the fort and arsenal at Cavite, and also took possession of the navy yard, the *Raleigh* and *Baltimore* were sent down to Corregidor Island to silence all the batteries at the entrance of Manila Bay. A flag of truce was sent in to the commandant at the island, and, on learning the truth of what had occurred, he agreed to surrender if the men should be allowed their liberty. As no prisoners were desired, this was satisfactory, and the men were placed under parole not to take up arms against the Americans nor to allow a gun to be fired at any American ship going in or out of the harbor.

Although the majority of the Spanish vessels had

been destroyed, three steam tugs had been captured, along with the *Manila*, the ship fitted up for fighting purposes. During the three days following, a number of other vessels were taken, and, later still, a large Spanish war vessel, the *Callao*. The taking of the *Callao* was full of the grim humor that all sailors enjoy. She had been among the southern islands for many months, and knew nothing of any war having been declared. She steamed straight for Cavite, expecting to meet sister ships there, when, without warning, the *Olympia* fired upon her. The Spanish commander thought the American ship was indulging in target practice, and turned to steam out of range, when several other vessels came to the *Olympia's* aid, and then the Spaniard saw that the whole matter was no joke, counted the American vessels through his glass, caught sight of the wrecks in Cavite harbor, and lost no time in surrendering. The *Callao* was a gunboat of two hundred tons, carrying four modern guns and a crew of forty. Sailors were speedily sent to take charge of the prize; the commander and his crew were sent ashore, and an hour later the stars and stripes floating above the *Callao* indicated that she had been added to the American squadron.

It was, of course, desirable that news of the victory should be sent to the United States by way of cable and telegraph without delay. But the only cable from Manila was that to Hong Kong, and that the Spanish held. As he could not send his own messages, Commodore Dewey promptly resolved that the Spanish should not send theirs, and he had one of his ships pick up the cable lying on the bottom of the bay and cut it. Then he prepared his despatches, and sent them to Hong Kong on the *McCulloch*.

Larry felt that the despatch boat would soon leave, and anxious, now that the big battle was over, to learn something concerning the *Columbia*, he asked for permission to take the trip across the China Sea.

"You can go, my lad," said Commodore Dewey, for the boy had gone directly to him. "I understand you did very well at the gun to which you were assigned. When you get to Hong Kong you can then make up your mind as to whether or not you care to return. If not, you may consider yourself as honorably discharged from the service," and then he shook hands and smiled.

Larry had expected that Striker would accom-

pany him on the trip, but the tall down-easter declined. "This jest suits me to death, Larry," he said. "I wouldn't miss a day of it for a fortune. Don't you forget to come back; I'll be a-watchin' for you." And an affectionate parting followed, for both had grown to think a great deal of each other.

The trip on the *McCulloch* to Hong Kong occupied several days, but with nothing happening out of the ordinary. As the stanch despatch boat came in sight of the numerous shipping at the Chinese-English port, Larry kept his eyes wide open for a possible sight of the *Columbia*. He had just about given up hope, when he caught a glimpse of a hull which looked strangely familiar.

"Will you lend me your glass for just a moment?" he asked of a news correspondent standing by. "I think that's my ship over to our port."

The glasses were cheerfully loaned, and one look convinced Larry that he was right. There was the *Columbia*, somewhat battered around the bow and with her foremast still missing, and there, yes, there were Captain Ponsberry and Tom Grandon on her deck!

"*Columbia*, ahoy!" he yelled at the top of his

lungs, but he was too far off to be heard, and had to content himself with locating the craft as best he could, while the despatch boat steamed up to the regular landing.

"What's the news?" was the first question asked by a hundred throats, for the vessel had been seen from afar.

"Complete victory for the Americans — Spanish fleet utterly wiped out!" was the answer that started a rapid flow of conversation upon every hand. Soon the news was known everywhere, and scores of telegrams were speeding in every direction. When the news reached the United States, everybody was jubilant, and Congress voted thanks to the men who had taken part in the glorious contest, while Commodore Dewey was made Rear Admiral.

Once on shore, Larry lost no time in making his way along the busy street skirting the harbor, until he came to the quay at which the *Columbia* was tied up. A rope ladder was out, and soon he was climbing on board.

"Bless my soul! Is it really Larry Russell?" ejaculated Captain Ponsberry, when confronted. "Why, I thought you were at the bottom of the China Sea!" And he caught the boy by both hands.

"Larry Russell, as sure as fate!" cried Grandon, rushing forward. "Well, this is the most wonderful thing I ever heard of. How on earth did you escape drowning and get here?" And he, too, nearly wrung Larry's hand off.

"It's a long story," was the boy's answer to both. "I and Luke Striker floated about until we struck an island, and —"

"Then Luke is safe, too!" broke in Captain Ponsberry. "The Lord be praised, as the parson would say. It's wonderful! simply wonderful! So ye got on an island, and some ship picked ye off, I calkerlate?"

"No, we found an old boat, and set sail in it. But the boat went to pieces, and we floundered around until the Asiatic Squadron came along and Commodore Dewey picked us up, and —".

"The fleet that set sail to fight the Spaniards?" interrupted Grandon.

"Yes."

"Then the fleet's come back here?"

"No, only the despatch boat. The warships are at Manila. I was with them up to a few days ago, and we sunk or burned every one of the Dons' vessels," added Larry, proudly.

Taken together, the news was so marvellous that Captain Ponsberry could scarcely believe it, and soon he was asking Larry for all the particulars, which the boy was only too willing to give.

"I reckon you would like to know what has become of Olan Oleson," remarked Grandon, during a brief pause.

"I would. He pushed Luke and myself overboard."

"The parson thought he did, and we put him in irons for the rest of the trip. When we got here we were on the point of making a complaint to the authorities against him, when the captain of another vessel had him locked up for atrocious assault. He is in prison now, and likely to stay there for some time to come."

"He deserves it," was Larry's reply. "I intended to make some charge against him, if I could locate him. I hope his term in prison does him good. I never want to see him again."

Hobson and several others now came forward, and were equally glad to find that the lad was safe. During the talk which followed Larry learned that the *Columbia* had had a good deal of trouble during the hurricanes, but had finally reached Hong Kong

with only the loss of the foremast and a battered bow, due to the falling of the heavy stick. She had sprung several small leaks, but her pumps had easily kept her free of water.

"And the parson — where is he?" asked Larry of the captain.

"He is still in Hong Kong," was the reply, and, receiving the Rev. Martin Wells' address, the boy took the privilege of calling upon the missionary, and was very warmly received.

"Truly you have had some wonderful adventures," said Mr. Wells, after listening to the youth's recital. "But I take it you are rather proud of them — especially of your work on the *Olympia* at Manila."

And Larry, frank to the last, admitted that this was so.

Here properly ends the tale of Larry Russell's adventures "Under Dewey at Manila." We have seen how fortune, by a curious combination of circumstances, threw him in with the Asiatic Squadron, and how gallantly he fought during that battle which, with the exception of our second great naval victory near Santiago Bay, has no equal in history.

That Larry was proud at having participated in the glorious conquest was but natural. What American boy would not have been proud?

The *McCulloch* was to return to Manila Bay with despatches almost immediately, and the boy was strongly tempted to go back in her. But he wished first to hear from his brothers, and so resolved to stay in Hong Kong until the despatch boat might make a second trip to that port. Of his future adventures we shall hear later on.

In the mean time, however, I would ask my young readers who have followed me through the foregoing pages, to transfer their attention for a while to Ben Russell, Larry's oldest brother. As Ben had written in his letter, he had preferred the soldiery, and on the President's first call for 125,000 volunteers, he had given up his position in New York, and joined the army. The haps and mishaps of the youth will be related in another volume, to be entitled "A Young Volunteer in Cuba; or, Fighting for the Single Star." In this book we shall not only become intimately acquainted with Ben, but we shall also catch glimpses of Larry and of the other brother, Walter, who had gone into the navy stationed in Atlantic waters. We shall likewise learn

something more of Job Dowling, and of what was done by the boys toward getting that which was justly due them from their miserly step-uncle.

And now, for the time being, good-by to Larry Russell, the American sailor boy who served so gallantly "Under Dewey at Manila."

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